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THE
CHURCH OF ROME IN IRELAND
IN ITS RELATION
TO
THE STATE.

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CHURCH OF ROME IN IRELAND
IN ITS RELATION
TO
THE STATE;
WITH
REMARKS ON THE QUESTION OF THE ENDOWMENT
OF THE
ROMAN CATHOLIC CLERGY.

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THE
CHURCH OF ROME IN IRELAND
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THE STATE.

THE object of these pages is to bring under the notice of unprejudiced men and of honest though prejudiced men, of all creeds and parties, the relation which exists between the Roman Catholic Church of Ireland and the State. An impression has become generally prevalent, that the time has arrived for making an attempt to improve that relation. The minds, not of statesmen only, but of candidates and constituencies, of all indeed who take an interest in the public weal are in anxious expectation of a proposal from the government to that end. My own opinion has long been, that a frank and cordial recognition of the religious establishments and institutions of the Irish people—such an adoption of them by the Legislature of the United Kingdom as conscientious Catholics might accept, and conscientious Protestants support—would tend more to the suppression of social discord—to harmony between all classes of the Queen's subjects—to the strength and security of the empire than any other measure which could be devised. I believe that an honest endeavour to attain so happy a consummation would not be disappointed. It were a matter of deep regret, that it should be retarded, by a vain struggle to obtain acceptance for distasteful, illtimed, impossible projects, and it is in the earnest hope of contributing to the good which may be intended

and of averting the evil to be feared, that I submit these observations to the public.

Nothing can be more unjust or more obstructive to a due consideration of the means by which existing evils may be removed than to visit on the present generation, the sins of its forefathers. The Roman Catholics were justly suspected in times gone by of adhering to an exiled dynasty, and of an intention to disturb the settlement of property established by the English arms in Ireland.—Admitted.

The penal code, says Burke, was a machine of wise and elaborate contrivance, and as well calculated for the oppression, impoverishment, and degradation of a people, and the debasement in them of human nature itself as ever proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man.—Admitted. But beyond deploring historical truths by the assertion of which political and religious feelings are too often embittered, what have we now to do with them? Our object should be to efface the memory of past oppression from the minds of those whose ancestors were the instruments, and of those whose ancestors were the victims of it; to mitigate as far as possible that conflict of interests which had its origin in ancient injustice; by removing all present causes of dissension, to make friendship possible between the descendants of the vanquished and of the conquerors—and to render all alike emulous to promote the happiness and prosperity of the great empire—to which, except when quarrelling among themselves, they all glory to belong.

Let us, therefore, under the influence of a conciliatory and charitable spirit, before we proceed to consider the existing impediments to a more friendly relation between the Roman Catholic Church of Ireland and the State, recall to our remembrance the measures which in our own time, have been passed, to better the condition of Catholics. Not long ago a wish was expressed by (a) a distinguished Prelate of the Irish Roman Catholic Church, one who has never shrunk

(a) Dr. Cantwell, Bishop of Meath.

from an active and patriotic part in the constitutional struggles of his countrymen—that some person competent to the task, would undertake a new edition of Mr. Scully's most able work on the Penal Laws, first published in 1812. Scarce twenty years have passed since the time when every page of that remarkable production bore evidence to grievances affecting the civil and religious interests of the Irish people, still avowed, unredressed, nay justified by their rulers. Well do I remember, the wounded spirit, the sense of grief and humiliation with which I first rose from its perusal.

When Mr. Scully wrote—Catholics were excluded from both Houses of Parliament—from all offices of trust, honour, and emolument in corporate cities—in the army and navy—or connected with the administration of the laws.

They were oppressed by tithes and church-rates—by taxes levied on them in every parish for purposes which they condemned, by vestries from which they were by law excluded.

The example set by the law in respect to offices, the approach to which it had guarded by barriers which, no Catholic could pass, was mimicked in every path to which human industry can be directed, by almost all whose position in society placed favour, promotion, employment, at their disposal.

His church and its pastors were ignored by the law and constitution of his country, or known only for penalty and restraint; the bequests of the munificent of his communion for pious and charitable objects, when not confiscated by direct enactment, were perverted by *sy près* construction, to purposes the very opposite of those intended by their donors, and even in his Sovereign's Courts of Justice, he felt—and had reason to feel—that against a Protestant, however good his cause, he had small hope of success (a).

Let us now advert to the statutes by which this miserable

(a) Scully's Penal Laws, Introduction, p. x. See also a Letter to the Lord Bishop of Cashel, by the Rev. Baptist W. Noel, M.A., 1845. Nisbet, Berners-street.

position has been changed. The reader, who knows the practical operation and the motives which dictated the enactment of some of them, may smile at their appearance in an enumeration of Catholic successes. I don't conceal from myself, the influence which the suggestions of expediency more perhaps than the sense of justice, may have had in their enactment; I am not insensible to their short comings, but they are all, the results of legal constitutional remonstrance against injustices, committed in the name and maintained for ages, under a mistaken view of her own interest, by the power of England—they are all recognitions by the English Legislature, of the impolicy of adhering to a system, by which Irishmen were treated as aliens in their native land—every one of them, makes some heart-breaking chapter of Mr. Scully's book, obsolete as the code administered by the Brehons of old—and contains ground of hope, that a fair, sincere, honest endeavour to establish such relations between the Church of Rome in Ireland and the Civil Government of the Empire—as may consist with the honour, character and conscience of both, would, as it ought, to succeed. They are—

The Easement of Burials Act (*a*); the Tithe Composition Acts (*b*); the Roman Catholic Relief Act (*c*); the Irish Church Temporalities Acts (*d*); the Abolition of Tithes and Substitution of Rent Charges Act (*e*); the Irish Municipal Corporation Reform Act (*f*); the Repeal of Penalties on Catholic Clergymen celebrating Marriages between Protestant and Catholics Act (*g*); the Act for the Relief of the destitute Poor in Ireland (*h*); the Act for the Amendment of the Maynooth College Acts (*i*).

(*a*) 5 Geo. 4, c. 25. See *post*.

(*b*) 4 Geo. 4, c. 99—5 Geo. 4, c. 63—7 & 8 Geo. 4, c. 60.

(*c*) 10 Geo. 4, c. 7.

(*d*) 3 & 4 Wm. 4, c. 37—6 & 7 Wm. 4, c. 99—3 & 4 Vict. c. 91.

(*e*) 1 & 2 Vict. c. 99.

(*f*) 3 & 4 Vict. c. 108.

(*g*) 3 & 4 Wm. 4, c. 102.

(*h*) 1 & 2 Vict. c. 66, ss. 48, 49.

(*i*) 8 & 9 Vict. c. 25.

Many of these statutes disappointed the benevolent intentions of their authors, by the tincture of bitterness, which those who had battered on religious discord, contrived to infuse into the cup of concession. The Easement of Burials Act; the Municipal Corporations—Reform Act; the Irish Church Temporalities Act; the Bequests' Act; even the great Act of Catholic Emancipation, so bold, so free, so unqualified in its general outline, so honourable to the great men, who, adopting the cause long advocated by their political rivals, made noble sacrifices for its success, is not exempt from the trace of such littleness.

It surely had been more creditable to the Parliament of 1828, and more comfortable for the Parliament now about to assemble, if when other Catholics were restored to their civil privileges, the religious orders of the Roman Catholic Church had not been anathematized and proscribed. The Irish Church Temporalities Act again—the authors of which would be entitled to all praise, if its object had been, not the Church of a class, but the Church of a nation, is disfigured by the same meanness. It had been better, as I think, for the credit of the Establishment, to have diminished the incomes than the number of the Irish bishopricks, but having resolved, in defiance of the 5th Article of the Act of Union, upon provisions for converting into money—the mensal lands, demesnes and palaces of the supernumeraries, is it possible to conceive any thing more paltry than the arrangement by which the sale of them to the highest bidder was restrained, lest the bidding should chance to be for the purposes of the Roman Catholic Church? (a)

By these Acts of Parliament, the Roman Catholic laity of Ireland were admitted to many invaluable civil privileges, and relieved from the extreme vexation of many irritating and oppressive burthens, but the relation of their Church to the State was in no respect altered. Not a word of their bishops and clergy—their religious and charitable institutions—their temples for the worship of God—their seminaries for the

(a) 3 & 4 Wm. 4, c. 37, s. 39, and 6 & 7 Wm. 4, c. 99, s. 16.

education of the priests who were to minister in them, or the maintenance of those priests in a station which excluded them from all remunerative employment, to be found in the Act of Union, or in any other statute passed by the Imperial Parliament, before the last administration of Sir Robert Peel.

In the year 1844, by an act (*a*) which repealed one of the most oppressive of the merciless laws enacted by the Irish Parliament against the faith of their countrymen, but contained new, and uncalled for, restrictions on the pious munificence of the Irish people, a churlish half civil notice was taken of the fact, that men whose order, and apostolic succession, had always been recognised throughout the Christian world, and at least as eagerly at Lambeth as at Rome were, not indeed of the dioceses in which they exercised their functions and possessed the affectionate veneration of a vast majority of the people, yet still in some sense or other, Bishops and Archbishops. Were it not pitiable, it would be amusing, to observe the ingenious contrivances—the shuffle of words, by which since that statute it has been contrived to evade—a frank admission of the plain truth, that the Most Reverend Dr. Crolly, and the Most Reverend Dr. Murray are as much the Roman Catholic Archbishops of Armagh and of Dublin as St. Ambrose was Roman Catholic Archbishop of Milan, or St. Athanasius of Alexandria. The words “Roman Catholic” prefixed to their ecclesiastical designation had surely sufficed to distinguish the titles by which they were commonly known, and under which they exercised their jurisdiction—from the titles guaranteed by law to the prelates of the United Church of England and Ireland. The shifts to which the Sovereign and her servants have been driven in their official intercourse with these gentlemen, to observe the courtesies of life, and the respect due to illustrious station, without absolutely violating the law, are of a nature to excite compassion. “His Grace the Lord Archbishop

(*a*) The Act for the more effectual application of Charitable Donations and Bequests in Ireland, 7 & 8 Vict. c. 97.

William Crolly" is the elaborate title under which the Roman Catholic Primate under the Queen's letters patent, takes his seat at the Board of Charitable Donations and Bequests. Lord Grey in his despatches to the colonial governors, reads the act as meaning on this point what it ought to have meant, and is suitably chastened for his misprision. Lord Clarendon more versed in the amenities of verbal arrangement, addresses his correspondence (a) to "Archbishop Murray, of Dublin," atones for the informality prescribed by statute, by a prodigal employment of the lawful expletives "My Lord," and "Your Grace," and sometimes even ventures as far as "Your Grace's Diocese." The poor Irish priest, to whom every thing that passes between his ecclesiastical superior, and the ministers of his Sovereign, is matter of the deepest interest, spells each line of the state document—notes the caution with which scant courtesy to his order is extended—and feels in his inmost soul, that the Church to the laborious service of which his life has been vowed, is still "uncherished as a good, still only tolerated as an inevitable evil!"

The act of the next year (b) was of a very different stamp, and worthy of the statesmanlike capacity of the minister who proposed it to Parliament. A sum of £7000, had in redemption of a reluctant pledge given in a moment of alarm by the Irish Parliament, been annually and with much opportunity of religious heats and recriminations, paid to the Trustees of Maynooth College for the education of young men intending to take orders in the Church of Rome. Utterly inadequate to the exigency to which it was applied, the regular appearance of this miserable pittance in the estimates, was felt by almost all thinking men, to be a recognition by the Legislature, of its great duty of providing the means of educa-

(a) Letter of Lord Clarendon to Dr. Murray, enclosing extracts from the amended Statutes of the Queen's Colleges in Ireland, 19th March, 1848.

(b) 8 & 9 Vict. c. 5.

tion for those, whom Providence had destined to be the spiritual guides of the Irish People. Sir Robert Peel, resolved once for all, to avow that obligation—to put an end to the mean bickerings, the coarse insults which deprived the annual grant of all its grace, and half its usefulness—and to increase its amount to an extent, which must, with God's blessing, in good time, secure to the Irish Catholic altar, a succession of Bishops, priests and deacons, worthy as divines and scholars to stand comparison with the clergy of any Church of Christendom, Catholic or Protestant, in its palmyest days. Those who piously believed that increased knowledge was alone required to dispel the darkness and error of Popish superstition, were no doubt comforted by the certain hope of seeing their theory verified—men who, like Sir Robert Inglis, had more opportunities of observing the compatability of obstinacy, and learning, entertained doubts whether the Aquinases and Bellarmines of whom Maynooth was thenceforth to become the Alma Mater, would be more likely to abandon their faith than those whose imperfect education rendered them less competent to defend it. But the statesman, by whose order the act was drawn, set their fears and their scruples at naught. He was legislating for the Church of a Catholic people, a Church which he felt to be possessed of incalculable influence for good or for evil, and which it was no longer safe to exclude from the conservative policy of the Empire. By that brave bidding for Catholic confidence, he effaced the last remnant of the still lingering memory of his early parliamentary career. For a time at least, there was more joy over the one who had repented, than over the ninety-nine who had always been just, and whose sacrifices for conscience sake to the cause of their Catholic fellow subjects had been the brightest feature of their political lives. Nor in this, nor in the great reparation made by him twenty years before, was he false to the principles which have governed his public conduct. His defence, if defence he can ever need, will be found ages after the memory

of his detractors shall have perished, in the principles laid down more than fifty years ago for the guidance of British statesmen, by the first and ablest expounder of conservative principles, Edmund Burke.

“My humble and decided opinion is, that the three religions, prevalent more or less in various parts of these islands, ought, all, in subordination to the legal establishments, to be countenanced, protected, and cherished; and that, in Ireland particularly, the Roman Catholic religion should be upheld in high respect and veneration, and should be, in its place, provided with all the means, of making it a blessing to the people who profess it.” (a)

The effect of this practical indication of the bent of an eminent statesman, has been to direct public attention to the means of surmounting, what he had before avowed to be the great difficulty of government, by improving the relation of the Roman Catholic Church of Ireland to the State. And the only project which has yet been put forward for the attainment of that object is the measure which now meets us at every turn, in a shape more or less defined,—*The Endowment of the Roman Catholic clergy.*

Imagine a proposal conceived in the most liberal and friendly terms, free from all compromise of religious principle on either side, of a competent and secure provision for the Roman Catholic clergy of Ireland, exempt from the ceaseless fret of Parliamentary debate, and arranged upon a plan which shall not, in the least degree, interfere with the doctrine, discipline, canonical constitution, and episcopal jurisdiction of their Church. All these qualities I assume, because I know that a project deficient in any of them must, be lost upon the rock of conscientious objection.

Could it be honourably accepted?

Let us consider who the parties to the compact must be, that we may judge what befits them both, in the relation which they

(a) Letter to William Smith, Esq.

hold to each other, and to the interests committed to their charge. The State—the government of an empire over which a Protestant sovereign reigns, the chief advisers of whom, as well as the Legislature through which they rule, must in the main be Protestants, that is, opposed to the interests of the Catholic faith,—of an empire, nevertheless, which opens to the industry, the learning, the valour, the ambition, of the Irish Catholic nation—the noblest opportunities of distinction that ever stimulated the energies of mankind,—a government, to which the bishops and clergy of Ireland owe and inculcate submission in all things lawful, in obedience to the divine precept, of rendering to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are of God. The Roman Catholic Church of Ireland—not such as it is frequently presented to us, in the heat and excitement of party and religious discussion, but in the character which its origin, history, and constitution, the space it fills in the eye of Christendom, the power it exercises, the perils it has survived, have impressed upon it. Were it possible to forget the lustre which antiquity throws around that Church—the spectacle of a Religious Society, the priests of which have, for more than three centuries, been dependent for their daily bread, and for all the means of exercising their sacred functions, on the bounty of the poorest people of the earth, still fulfilling the main purposes of its establishment, and confronting, in dignified independence, the proud and hostile government, by which it has been disowned—can't be contemplated without feelings of respect and admiration. Four archbishops and twenty-three bishops, representing an unbroken hierarchy of fourteen centuries, in communion with the successor of the Apostle at Rome, and with more than a thousand prelates, testifying to the same faith, in all parts of the known world, may be excused for not grasping too readily, at arrangements for their personal comfort, without due regard to their honour, dignity, and duty. The Catholic Churches of Germany and of France, of Spain, Italy, and the Netherlands—of Asia, Africa, and the Americas, will

not, it may be hoped, be put to shame by any unworthy concessions of their Irish sister; nor will she, in all probability, deserve to be thrown off, in the face of the nations, for her greed of gold, her corruption, or her servility, by the poor but faithful people whom she serves.

That we may not, however, be misled by general considerations, from the practical question which we shall soon be called upon to decide, it may be well to realize to our mind's eye the position of a Roman Catholic bishop and his clergy, and the state of society in which they live and have their being.

I select a diocese, the comparatively fortunate position of which, enables me to depict, without fear of offence or exaggeration, a condition of things in all Irish dioceses, which, not for the sake of this Church or that, but for the sake of religion itself Christian men of every creed must deplore, a diocese, which a venerable prelate, who had for twenty years presided over it with consummate wisdom, has just left for his Reward (*a*), in the affairs of which I am no intruder—with the condition of which, by frequent residence during the last ten years, I have had opportunities of becoming personally acquainted.

The see of Ossory, if we may rely on the authority of Usher and of Ware, was founded in the fifth century by St. Kyran, at Seir Kyran, a small village of the Queen's County, still known by his name. Thence it was removed to Aghavoe, and finally, in the twelfth century, to Kilkenny, where the Cathedral of St. Canice, a spacious gothic temple, two hundred and twenty-six feet long, one hundred and twenty-nine broad, divided into nave, aisles, transept, choir and chancel, admirably adapted to the accommodation of a populous city, and to the suitable display of the pomp and splendour of the Catholic worship, was erected. This Church, with the assistance of the Churches of the Franciscan and Dominican Abbeys, and the great Abbey of St. John, sufficed

(*a*) Dr. Kinsella.

probably until the Reformation, to the citizens of Kilkenny, for the purposes of their public worship. In matters of religious belief and practice they were then all of one mind; of the same mind as the vast majority of them are now (a).

The auguries which attended the introduction of the new learning into Ossory, were not auspicious. Bale, the virulent and acrimonious impugner of Popery, was the first Bishop of the Reformed Faith. The constancy of Cromer, an Englishman, and Primate of Armagh, in his opposition to the spiritual pretensions of Henry, and the excommunication pronounced by his successor, Dowdal, against all who should presume to use "*the translation of the Church service into the mother tongue*," which the proclamation of Edward enjoined, had given heart and confidence to the adherents of Rome. Dowdal's scornful expression, that by the help of the English liturgy, any illiterate fellow might read mass—his deposition, and the elevation of Hugh Goodacre to the primatial dignity, were still fresh in the mouths of the people, when Bale's appointment was announced. He chose the occasion of his consecration by Archbishop Browne, one of the five Bishops who had conformed, to outrage the religious feelings of the faithful. As no law had yet been passed to authorize the order prescribed by the Ritual of the Reformed Church, and the people were hostile to its use, Goodacre, who was also to be consecrated, had agreed with Browne, that the Roman Rubric should be observed. But Bale, in the midst of the ceremony, refused to abide by the arrangement. On sight of the wafer which had been prepared for the communion, he hurried up the steps of the altar, rebuked the condescension of the new Primate, complained of fraud and imposition, and insisted that the service should be suspended until common bread was procured. Browne and his attendant prelates were

(a) The population of Kilkenny, according to McCulloch, consists of 21,000 Catholics—2741 Protestants of all denominations, but principally of the Established Church.

awed into submission (*a*). The people fled in horror from the Church, nor were his clergy ever reconciled to their Diocesan. During the short period of his stay in Ireland, he lived in a perpetual state of alarm and conflict. On his first attempt to preach in his Cathedral he was contradicted by the dean and the prebendaries. He returned to his castle amid the yells and execrations of an incensed multitude. Five of his domestics were slain before his face, and his life only saved by the vigorous exertions of the civil magistrates (*b*).

Elizabeth, at her accession, resolved to have the law on her side. In the second year of her reign, it was enacted by the Parliament of Ireland (*c*)—that all the acts of her sister Mary, by which the civil establishment of the Roman Catholic religion had been restored, should be repealed—that all officers or ministers, ecclesiastical or lay, should, on pain of forfeiture and total incapacity, take the oath of supremacy, and that every person who should maintain the spiritual supremacy of the Bishop of Rome, should forfeit all estates, real and personal, for the first offence, incur a *præmunire* for the second, and be guilty of high treason for the third.

“ And that all and singular ministers in any Cathedral or paroch

(*a*) Bale himself, in his “*Vocacyon of John Bale to the See of Ossorie*,” gives a curious account of this scene. He says that Browne, whom he calls an Epicure, a glutton, a loiterer, and a beast, purposely delayed his consecration, that he might pocket, as his metropolitan, the half-year’s revenue of his lyvinge. According to him, Lockwood, of Christchurch, “that blockhead,” and “asse-headed dean,” proposed the observance of the Roman Ritual, and Goodacre and Browne consented through fear of a tumult. On Bale’s insisting that a white manchett should be sent for, and threatening to report their contumacy, Browne conformed with a bad grace—and in an “unsaverly way,” as if he did not like that mode of partaking the “Lord’s Supper.”

(*b*) These outrages, says Leland, are pathetically related, but we are not informed what imprudences provoked them, or what was the intemperate conduct which his adversaries retorted with such shocking barbarity. Book 2, p. 200.

(*c*) A transcript of the English statute of the same date.

Church within the realm of Ireland, shall, *from and after the Feast of St. John the Baptist next ensuing, be bounden to say and use the mattens, even song, and celebration of the Lord's Supper, and administration of each of the Sacraments, and all their common and open prayer, as is mentioned in the Book of Common Prayer, and administration of Sacraments and other rites and ceremonies in the Church of England, authorized by the Parliament of England, of the 5 & 6 years of the raigne of King Edward the Sixth,*" under pain in case of their refusal, or of their using any other rite or ceremony, of forfeiture for the first offence, of one year's profits of their benefices and six months' imprisonment; for the second offence, of one year's imprisonment and deprivation of their benefices, at the pleasure of the patron; and for the third offence, of absolute deprivation of their benefices and imprisonment for life.

"And that from and after the sayd Feast of St. John the Baptist, all and every person and persons whatever living within this realm, *shall diligently and faithfully, having no lawful or reasonable excuse to be absent, resort to their paroch church or chappell accustomed, or to some usual place, where common prayer and such service of God shall be used upon every Sunday and holy dayes,* and there abide orderly and soberly during the time of common prayer, preachings or other service of God, upon pain of the censures of the Church, and of forfeiture of 12*d.* for every offence, to be levied by the churchwardens for the use of the poor." (a)

"And forasmuch as every common priest or minister hath not the knowledge of the English tongue, and for that the same may not be in the native Irish language, as well for the difficultie to get it printed, as that few of the whole realm can read the Irish letters, that it shall be lawful for the said common minister or priest to use and say the said mattens, even-song, celebration of the Lord's Supper, and administration of each of the Sacraments, and all their common and open prayers in the Latin tongue."

The manner in which this covert attempt to compel the adoption of the English novelties was met by the bishops and

clergy of the Irish Church need hardly be mentioned here (*a*). Deprivation, imprisonment, death, were preferred by them to submission. Their people "went out" with them to the hill tops (*a*), to hear the word of God from the lips of men whose sincerity was above suspicion; and assist at the celebration of the solemn mysteries of their religion, by confessors too happy to become martyrs in its cause. It was long before Reformed Ministers could be found to supply the places of the clergy who thus abandoned their cures. "The churches," says Leland, "fell to ruin; the people were left without religious worship or institution, even in places of most civilitie; and the statutes lately made were evaded, or neglected with impunity." As years rolled on, clerks more obsequious were placed and maintained in the vacant benefices by the power of England, and, for the first time in the history of any Christian land, the monstrous spectacle was presented, of a church without a people—a people without a church! The statute of Elizabeth, re-enacted after the troubles of the Commonwealth, by the 17th of Charles 2nd, c. 6, is still the law. Still, in every parish, on every Sabbath day, in front of the parish church, the descendants of the men who first defied its terrors, protest against its injustice; nor is the desolation worked by it in the holy places any where more conspicuous, than within the echoing aisles and untrodden precincts of St. Canice.

Yet the behest of Elizabeth is no where more religiously obeyed. A dean, precentor, chancellor, archdeacon, treasurer, or one of seven prebendaries, enjoying incomes in right of their dignities, and of the "benefices forming the corps thereof," varying from 130*l.* to 2500*l.* per annum, reads and prays six days of every week to the vacant stalls; on the seventh, to such rare worshippers as may chance to prefer the service of the cathedral to the more commodious sittings at St. Mary's, capable of accommodating 700; or St. John's, capable of

(*a*) Leland, vol. 2. See also the letter of Sir Henry Sidney to Queen Elizabeth, in the 18th year of her reign, in which he describes the state of the diocese of Meath. *Ibid*, p. 320.

accommodating 250 persons, and amply sufficient for the wants of the Protestant population. St. Canice has also a corporation of vicars choral, with revenues derived from the rents of houses, lands, and tithes of parishes held under them, the amount of which is unknown but to themselves (*a*). An ample Economy Fund provides for the organist, verger, sexton, sextoness, singing girls, bellows blowers, beadles, and bell-ringers, who are required for the service of the Church, and for the maintenance of its fabric in that excellent state of preservation, which Catholics and Protestants—the former possibly with something like the feelings of reversioners—are delighted to contemplate. Close to the cathedral is the deanery, now occupied by one, foremost in all good works, whose fortune, were it large as the poor could wish it, would sink under the benevolence of its dispenser. At the back of it is the episcopal palace, a handsome residence, surrounded by about forty acres of ornamental ground, and improved during the last thirty years at a charge, most moderate for an Irish See house, of about 3300*l*.

Spite of the irremediable falseness of his position, and the infirmities which weighed upon his latter years, the remembrance of the last Protestant prelate, who enjoyed the temporalities of Ossory, and of his family, is still respectfully cherished by their neighbours of both the Churches. But neither high attainments, nor unblemished character, nor distinguished

(*a*) These gentlemen profitting by the “kind memento” of Burns,

“Aye free aff’han your story tell,
When wi a bosom crony,
But still keep something to yoursel,
Ye scarcely tell to ony.”

declined, in 1834, to discover to the King’s commission, the annual renewal fines received from their lessees, or by what principle they had been regulated. This was the only instance of the kind. The answers to the queries of the commissioners were in all other cases unreserved. The beneficed clergy of the Irish Church, relying, as they well may, on the security of vested interests—placed the fullest information within their power, at the disposal of the Crown.

alliance, nor the influence derived from the patronage of dignities and benefices, the rents of messuages and of manors, and a life interest in 21,730 acres of "profitable land," sublet at enormous usury, by a lucky tenantry of lords and squires, and magistrates, could save his bishoprick from the fate of all institutions which are at war with the nature of things. Though secured "for ever"—"permanently and inviolably," by the Articles of Union (*a*) and the Roman Catholic Relief Act (*b*), it has been cut off by the Legislature as a superfluous sinecure in the Church! Reduced to the level of Old Leighlin, its patronage and spiritual jurisdiction have been transferred, under Lord Stanley's Act, to the richer diocese of Ferns; its revenues are vested in commissioners for the general purposes of the Establishment; and a few years hence it will be no more remembered than the bishoprick of Clonmacnoise, Glandelagh or Emly.

Yet wielding the same jurisdiction as was exercised in the 5th century by the Saint of Seir Kyran, bearing testimony to the faith which Kyran went to Rome to learn, and which the noble pile of St. Canice was built to perpetuate, there is still a Bishop of Ossory! Placed in a region above the career of political storms; independent of the whims of statesmen and the breath of parliaments, his see stands upon foundations, very different from those which have just slipped from the feet of its departed sister. His revenues, consisting of the voluntary offerings made to him as the parish priest of two parishes of his cathedral city, containing together a population of about 10,000 souls; and the united annual contributions of clergymen ministering in one hundred and eight chapels of his diocese, assure to him a position, not probably of affluence, but of independence. Of 44,000 heads of families, inhabiting the county of Kilkenny and one barony of the Queen's County, 36,000 at least, acknowledge his spiritual authority. I shall not presume

(*a*) Article 5.

(*b*) 10 Geo. 4, c. 7, s. 24.

to trespass on my personal recollection of kindness received during the last twenty years, from three Catholic Bishops of Ossory, further than to assure such supporters of the voluntary system as I trust may read these pages, that no discredit is thrown upon their principles by his house or establishment.

Around him, on all sides, arise evidences of the untiring zeal of his predecessors, in the cause of education and religion. Two chapels, capable of containing 6000 persons, built during the last ten years, one of them almost shaded by the old tower of St. Canice, and as large as its deserted nave; the restored Dominican abbey, with its magnificent window, and the chapel of a Capuchin convent, now in course of erection by its exemplary guardian (*a*), bear noble testimony to the piety of the people. A convent of nuns, of the Presentation Order, supplies gratuitous education to poor female children. St. Kyran's College, connected by Royal Charter with the University of London, a spacious building, in the domestic style, founded by the late Dr. Kinsella, is the ecclesiastical seminary of the diocese. The gradual completion of a new cathedral, of beautiful design and material, commenced by the same prelate, has only been suspended by the awful visitation with which it has pleased Providence to afflict the country. While millions were being spent on works of doubtful utility, what a glorious opportunity was lost of converting this, and similar unfinished structures, in all parts of Ireland, into monuments of national regret for national injustice and spoliation! It, too, has its dean and chapter, its precentor, treasurer, archdeacon, and prebendaries; all of them also parish priests, and depending, like their bishop, for support, on the gratitude and the justice of their flocks.

The opinion is now openly, and "with the deepest concern and most reluctant conviction," avowed, "that if a reasonable and honourable State Provision for the Roman Catholic clergy

(*a*) This man, the Rev. Peter Mulligan, literally sold all he possessed during the famine, and gave it to the poor. He is struggling now to provide employment by building the chapel of his convent, which convent is proscribed by the Relief and Bequests' Acts.

of Ireland be not adopted, the Established Church of Ireland will be swept away" (a).

Those who know nothing of the Roman Catholic clergy assume, that the discontent which prevails, more or less, in all parts of Ireland, is stimulated and fomented by them, that they are moved to this unworthy course by the inferiority of their worldly circumstances, as compared with those of the ministers of the Established Church, and that the surest mode of shoring that Church, against the irresistible pressure which threatens its destruction, is to take the former possessors of its property—its natural enemies into pay. Once released from dependence upon their flocks, they are expected to take a business-like, common sense view, of the ecclesiastical arrangements of their country—and to become gradually reconciled to a system, which, however objectionable in theory—will, at least, have the practical merit, of providing handsomely for themselves. No greater mistake can be made than that which is involved in this mode of reasoning. If there be one thing more striking than another, in the conduct and conversation of the Roman Catholic clergy of Ireland, it is their unwillingness to take part, or engage their people, in measures of hostility to the Established Church. Not that they are guilty of the duplicity of pretending, any interest in its stability—or insensible to the manifold mischiefs which result from the social discord which it engenders and feeds, but that they fear a contrary course might make the condition of those for whom they are most solicitous, worse even than it already is.

The Acts by which rent charges have been substituted for tithes—parish cesses and church rates abolished, have put an end to the lamentable collisions which formerly took place between the peasantry and the collectors of the Church revenues.

The owners of lands and houses, and the employers of labour are in great part Protestants; the small tenants and labourers for the most part Catholics.

(a) Quarterly Review, December, 1848, p. 298.

Looking to the patronage of their Church as to a means of providing for their families, the former have the deepest interest in discouraging any movement which may have a tendency to disappoint their expectations. When shared by not more than 120,000 families, the chance of obtaining one out of 139 dignities, of which the net annual income is 24,478*l.*; one of 178 prebends, the net annual income of which is 7894*l.* one of 1395 benefices, with an average net income in the provinces of Dublin or Cashel, of 336*l.* 2*s.* 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ *d.*—in the provinces, in Armagh and Tuam of 421*l.* 2*s.* 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ *d.* (a)—and next thing to nothing in the world to do, is too good to be sacrificed to any primitive tenderness for the dictates of a dependent's conscience. Evictions, notices to quit, loss of custom and of employment, would be the sure and certain fate of the village disturber, who should dare to fret under the yoke of the ascendancy. None know this better than the priests; and they forbear, in mercy to their people.

But it is one thing to submit in peace to unjust laws—another to become accomplices in the wrongs they perpetuate. By whatever sleight of legislation the fact may be veiled, the Catholic clergy know, that the weight of the Establishment is on the poor. Every where else, the sustentation and suitable adornment of the churches, in which the majority of the people worship—as well as the expenses of that worship—and the maintenance of its ministers, are thrown by law upon the land. It is so in England and in Scotland—and in theory also in Ireland (a). He who neither toils nor spins, and yet is secured in all the comforts and luxuries of life, may well spare

(a) It may be here observed, that the incomes hereafter stated are the net incomes returned by the incumbents, in 1837, to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners of Ireland, under the 3 & 4 Wm. 4, c. 37. By the 1 & 2 Vict. c. 109, so much of the gross income as was derived from tithe composition is reduced by one-fourth, and converted into rent-charge. This rent-charge has priority over all other charges, liens, mortgages, &c., affecting the lands chargeable therewith, but it is subject to deductions, on account of the poors' rate, under 1 & 2 Vict. c. 56, and 1 & 2 Vict. c. 109, s. 25. The gross incomes will be found in the Appendix.

the cost of the building, in which, once in the week, the artificers of his fortune, hope to be sheltered from cold and rain, while they listen to the only lessons which can make them contented with their lot. In Ireland, these charges fall on small freeholders and farmers, already fleeced by the proctors of a hostile creed, or on peasants doubtful of their next day's meal!

Every pound of rent-charge paid to the minister is at 10*d.* per day, a month's wages lost to an agricultural labourer. A nation, the industry of which is oppressed by the burthen of two such establishments as the establishments of the Church of England and of Rome in Ireland—must reel and faint under the load. It is idle to palter with the truth. The charge of the latter alone, precarious and inadequate as it is to the exigencies of its position, is as much as the country can bear. Were the large item required for the maintenance of the present Catholic clergy—provided from other sources—the supply of districts now destitute of spiritual care, the building, rebuilding, enlarging, and decoration of churches—the endowment of schools, orphanages, and diocesan seminaries, particularly as now restrained (*a*)—would still leave for years to come but a small surplus of the revenue collected by the Roman Catholic Church.

But let us accompany the dean, archdeacon, chancellor, precentor, and prebendaries of St. Canice, to the benefices which form the corps of their dignities and prebends, and in which they have cure of souls, and see whether it be worthy of the Queen's government, to offer—of the Churchmen and Dissenters of England to permit—of the Catholic clergy to accept, a pecuniary compromise with the existing system. I avoid the mention of names because it is far from my wish to give pain, and because most of the individual clergymen to whom reference is made, are not only entirely innocent of the evils which I deplore, but by their considerate and charitable conduct contribute much

(*a*) 7 & 8 Vict. c. 97, s. 16.

to their mitigation. Be it remembered, that all the charges which formerly in Ireland as now in England were provided for by Church-rates, are since 3 & 4 Wm. 4, c. 37, defrayed by the ecclesiastical commissioners, out of funds placed at their disposal by Parliament. These funds consist of the revenues of suppressed bishopricks and dignities—of benefices in which Divine service had not been celebrated during three years previous to 1st February, 1833, and of a graduated tax varying from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 15 per cent. on all ecclesiastical incomes not exceeding 300*l*. The building, rebuilding, enlarging, and repairing of churches—the fencing of churchyards—the providing of Bibles, Prayer Books, Communion elements, stoves, candles, surplices and other things necessary for the celebration of Divine worship, fall under this head. A sum of about 35,000*l*. (a) is annually disbursed, by the commissioners, for the expenses of Divine worship alone. For several years an outlay of not less than 50,000*l*. was incurred for the repair, rebuilding, and enlargement of churches. That item in the estimates is now decreasing, and there is no doubt—that the churches, such as they are, throughout Ireland, are in perfect order and preservation. As respects the diocese of Ossory I infer from the fact, that the commissioners have found it necessary to rebuild only two—that of Kells (b), capable of accommodating 200—that of Offerlane (c), capable of accommodating 400 persons, and to enlarge only one, that of Kilculliheen, capable of accommodating 200 persons, as well as, from the general appearance of those I have seen, that they afford abundant church room for the Protestants of the parishes in which they are situate.

Aghavoe—with a net income of 526*l*. 3*s*. 1*d*., a population of 6196, and a church “capable of accommodating” 200;—Offer-

(a) See their Reports to the Lord Lieutenant for 1846, 1847, and 1848.

(b) At an expense of 687*l*. 13*s*. 10*d*.

(c) At an expense of 1211*l*. 7*s*. 5*d*. See the Appendix to the Report of the Commissioners in 1843.

lane, with a net income of 600*l.*, a population of 9915, a church “capable of accommodating” 400 persons;—Rathdowney, with a net income of 500*l.*, a population of 6654, and a church capable of accommodating 250 persons;—St. Patrick and Urlingford, with a net income of 579*l.* 1*s.* 1*d.*, a population of 2743, and no church, with a commodious residence at Kilkenny—constitute the corps of the deanery of St. Canice.

Tullogherin—with a net income from rectorial tithes, amounting to 194*l.* 18*s.*, a population of 895, and a church “capable of accommodating” 100 persons, constitutes the corps of the precentorship.

Incheholohan, Outrath and Grove, with a net income of 459*l.* 4*s.* 11½*d.*, a population of 2621, and a church “capable of accommodating” 300 persons, form the corps of the chancellorship of St. Canice—the incumbent also holds the benefice of the Rower, with a net income of 506*l.* 13*s.*, a population of 3589, and a church “capable of accommodating” 200 persons.

Ennisnag, with a glebe-house, built at an expense of 738*l.* 9*s.* 3*d.*, a net income of 152*l.* 6*s.* 1*d.*, a population of 550, a church capable of accommodating 200 persons, forms the corps of the treasurer'ship.

The Rectory of Kilfane and the Vicarages of Tullogherin, and Blanchvilles Town, with an excellent glebe-house, built at a cost of 1384*l.* 12*s.* 3¼*d.*, a net income of 505*l.* 17*s.*, a population of 2017, and a church capable of accommodating 100 persons, form the corps of the archdeaconry.

The Benefice of Blackrath, with a net income of 130*l.* 10*s.* 4*d.*, a population of 730, no residence, and no church, constitutes the corps of the prebend of Blackrath.

The Rectories of Aghoure, Rathbeagh, Clashacrow, Clomantagh—the Vicarages of Tubridbrittain, Sheffin, Balleen, and Coolcashin, with an excellent glebe-house, a net income of 755*l.* 3*s.* 6*d.*, a population of 6486 souls, one church capable of accommodating 300 persons; the Vicarages of Rathcoole and Kilkyran, with a net income of 93*l.* 4*s.*, a population of

1331, and no church, form the corps of the prebend of Aghoure.

The Rectory of Mayne, with a net income of 220*l.* 19*s.* 0½*d.*, with a population of 633—and no church forms the corps of the prebend of Mayne.

The Rectory of Kilmanagh, with a glebe-house, built at a cost of 1402*l.* 14*s.* 0¾*d.*, a net income of 549*l.* 12*s.* 7½*d.*, a population of 1663, and a church capable of accommodating eighty persons, constitutes the corps of the Prebend of Kilmanagh.

The Vicarage of Inistiogue, and the Rectory and Vicarage of Clonameary, with a glebe-house, built at a cost of 960*l.* 4*s.* 7½*d.*, a net income of 288*l.* 3*s.* 9*d.*, a population of 3998 souls, and a church capable of accommodating 200 persons, forms the corps of the prebend of Clonameary (*a*).

The duty of these several dignitaries in respect of their dignities, is to preach in rotation one month in every year in the Cathedral of St. Canice—they are for the most part habitually resident in their respective benefices—and, considering their station in society, and the expense necessarily incurred, in educating and providing for their children, no one can think their incomes excessive. But the question is, whether a Church establishment can be justified, solely or mainly on the ground of its providing handsomely for the families of the clergy, and these incomes are inordinate, when the amount of service rendered for them is considered, and when added to the sums expended by the people for the purposes of their own worship. Nor do the benefices I have mentioned present the most remarkable contrasts in the diocese of Ossory, between the amount of the population and the church room required for the Protestant parishioners. Thus,

Castlecomer with a net income of 825*l.* 6*s.* 7½*d.*, a glebe-house, built at a cost of 1647*l.* 13*s.* 10*d.*, has a population of

(*a*) Report (1837) of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners of Ireland on the Revenue and Patronage of the Irish Church. Diocese of Ossory, p. 144.

13,242, and two churches capable together of accommodating 700 persons.

Callan Union, comprising the rectories of Callan, Coolaghmore, Killaloe, Tullomain, Ballycallan, and Tullaroan, with a net income of 2197*l.* 15*s.* 7½*d.*, has a population of 14,647,—one church in Callan capable of accommodating 250 persons, and one in Ballycallan capable of accommodating 80 persons.

Burnchurch Union, including the vicarages of Burnchurch and Danesfort—the districts of Kilfera and Pleberstown—the rectories of Jerpoint-West, Ballylinch, Grangelegan, Dunbella, Kilreegrange, Blacknew, Mollgrange, Blackrath, Grangelovin, and Rathbin has a glebe-house built at an expense of 3692*l.* 6*s.* 2*d.*, a net revenue of 1333*l.* 10*s.* 6*d.*, a population of 7965, and one church capable of accommodating 100 persons.

Kells Union, comprising the vicarage of Kells, the rectory of Ballytobin—the rectories of Killree, Mallardstown, Stumcarty, Earlstown, and Annamult has a glebe-house built at a cost of 1700*l.*, a net income of 698*l.* 8*s.*, a population of 5778, and two churches capable of accommodating together 420 persons.

Knoctopher Union, including the rectories and vicarages of Knocktopher, Kilneddy, Aghaviller, Kiltorcan, Derrynahensy, Kilmoganny, Kilkerrill, Kilkeasy, and Donemaggin, has a glebe-house built at a cost of 1493*l.*, a net income of 1093*l.* 19*s.* 5½*d.*, a population of 7,327, and one church capable of accommodating 200 persons.

Gowran has a glebe-house built at a cost of 1062*l.* 3*s.* 8*d.*, a net income of 446*l.* 6*s.* 10¾*d.*, a population of 2735, and one church capable of accommodating 150 persons.

Twenty benefices with “cure of souls,” containing a population of 98,992 souls, with seventeen churches enlarged to the utmost probable need of their respective parishes, and with church room for not more than 4330 persons!!!

Of the whole diocese, the population is about 230,000, the

number of churches forty-nine (*a*), the number of incumbents fifty-nine, their net annual revenues 22,907*l.* 10*s.* 9*d.*, and church room for 9170 persons !!

Various circumstances have combined to make the diocese of Ossory as favourable a test for the Establishment, of its actual services to the people, as any which could be selected. With the exception of two large estates, almost all the fixed property of at least six out of the eight baronies (*b*) with which it is co-extensive, is in the hands of Protestants. The number of absentee proprietors is comparatively small; the several branches of the great historic houses of Ormonde and Mountgarret, as well as the noble families of Ponsonby, and Agar, mindful of the maxim that property has its duties as well as its rights, have hitherto considered the tenants on their large possessions, to be worthy of their personal care. Every thing that could be done by the Establishment itself, by the countenance and encouragement of its most powerful and popular members, and the example of a numerous resident gentry, to wean the people from the old religion, and reconcile them to the "*mattens, even-song, and administration of the two Sacraments, as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer,*" has been done, and failed. The desperate fidelity with which they adhere to their solemn protest against the Act of Elizabeth, and the uniformity thereby enjoined, is really remarkable. The chapels and friaries, some of them erected and maintained at a painful cost, yet often with earthen floors and but indifferent roofs, are crowded twice or thrice on every Sunday to suffocation—the parish churches all but empty.

Indeed, I am much mistaken if there are 4000 persons in the diocese of Ossory in the habit of attending the service of the Establishment. From Ferry Bridge, opposite Waterford, along the right side of the Barrow to its junction with the Nore, includ-

(*a*) See Appendix.

(*b*) The barony of Upper Ossory, in the Queen's County, is in this diocese.

ing the most populous portions of the barony of Ida-Igrin, and Ibercon; thence through Rosbercon, or the Rower, to the bridge of Inistiogue, the Protestant inhabitants, if any, of any class, are few and far between. In the baronies of Gowran, Kells, and Knoctopher, they are more numerous; farmers, millers, tradesmen, and country gentlemen. Kilkenny and its vicinity contribute their quota, as do also the baronies of Iverk, Fassadineen and Upper Ossory. But although the most striking feature on the principal roads throughout these districts, is the constant recurrence of glebe-houses and ornamental glebes, of a description hardly so frequent in any part of England, and nowhere in Scotland, the sinecures made manifest by a glance at the Sunday congregations of the large villages—are too glaring to leave a doubt upon the question. The church of the Union of Burnchurch, consisting of 21,703 statute acres, might be closed to-morrow, without inconvenience to a third of the small number it is capable of containing. During the progress of the late state trials at Clonmel, I spent the morning of Sunday, the first of October, at Callan, the benefice of which we have seen, contains a population of 14,647 souls. The chapel of the Rev. John Mullens, the parish priest and prebendary of Cloneamory—a handsome structure, erected during his incumbency by his parishioners at a cost of 3400*l.*, was at the nine o'clock and the eleven o'clock services, completely full. The chapel of the Augustinian Friary, not so large, but still of considerable dimensions, was also full at the masses of nine, half-past nine, and again at eleven o'clock. Knowing the value of the Protestant benefice, and struck with the mean appearance of the parish church, built within, and contrasting strongly with, the ruin of an ancient Gothic abbey of great beauty and extent, I resolved to ascertain with my own eyes the actual number of its congregation. It consisted of eighty-seven persons, men, women and children, besides about ten soldiers belonging to a regiment quartered in the town!!

Thanks to the pious energy of a Carmelite Friar, a chapel was built some years ago at Knoctopher, which once in every week, receives a greater number of worshippers than the united congregations of seven Protestant Churches within an hour's ride of it (*a*). But perhaps the largest village of the diocese is Thomastown, in which several respectable Protestant families reside. I never can forget the impression produced upon my mind by the appearance of the Catholic chapel there, on my first visit to Ireland in 1822. There must be standing room in it for 1500 persons. It has a mud floor. The rail which separates the sanctuary in which I sat, from the body of the chapel was strengthened by iron stanchions, to enable it to sustain the weight of the people, and fearful was the rush of men and women, huddled together like sheep or beeves, as they rose from their knees, after the communion, and were pressed forward by the multitude from without. That sight I have often witnessed since, and always, with sorrow and shame! I was told by the Rev. Laurence Murphy, the late parish priest, that his annual income varied from 300*l.* to 350*l.*, out of which he had to maintain two curates, and that his parishioners were too poor to enlarge or rebuild their chapel. He died, a year ago, in a wretched lodging near the town, leaving a sum of 200*l.* to his flock, as his contribution towards an object which his successor, under the advice of the bishop, has not yet felt himself justified in attempting. The Catholic parish of Thomastown has two Catholic chapels of ease, and is much larger than the Protestant benefice. The latter contains a population of 3959, the incumbent has a net income of 488*l.* 6*s.* 5*d.*, a glebe-house, surrounded by park-like grounds, built at an expense of 1025*l.* 15*s.* 8¼*d.*, and a church within the ruins of a much larger one, capable of accommodating 120 persons. About sixty are, on Sundays, in the habit of attending it.

(*a*) Knoctopher, Kells, Kilmoganny, Thomastown, Kilfane, Ennisnag, Dungarvan.

This, on a small scale, is a faithful picture of the system, to which the Roman Catholic prelates and priests of Ireland will, if common fame speaks truth, be soon called upon to subscribe. Their seal is at last found necessary to the bond given by the Act of Uniformity, and confirmed by the Act of Union, to the Church by law established in Ireland. Without it the security is deemed worthless. They are asked to take up the parchment for the honor of Edward and Elizabeth. Gold more than their necessities require, paid quarterly on a Treasury warrant, without condition, account, or inquiry—assured competence with all the blessings in its train—personal comfort, the means of hospitality, the delights of literature, the luxuries of charity—a life of merit, and an age of ease—every thing, save a clear conscience—will be the reward of their compliance. Can the gain be “justified by honor?” They and their people think not. The acceptance by the heir of Charles Radcliffe of the dole flung to him from the Treasury of Greenwich Hospital (*a*), is surely no precedent for them! During the twenty years which have elapsed since the laity of their communion were restored to the privileges of the Constitution, the Catholic clergy have abstained from all attacks upon the temporalities of the Establishment. Until it pleased God to mow down their people with the scythe of disease and hunger, they had almost become resigned to their enormity. In that course they are ready to persevere. If the Church falls by its own weight, how are they to blame? It will be time enough to consider the propriety of receiving salaries from the State, when their position and character as parochial ministers shall be recognised by the State. Having shared in the prosperity of their flocks, “the clergy of Ireland are now willing to share in their privations, and are determined to resist a measure calculated to create vast discontent, to sever the people from their pastors, and ultimately to endanger Catholicity in their country” (*b*).

(*a*) Quarterly Review for September, 1848, p. 605.

(*b*) See the Resolutions of the Assembled Prelates, October 11th, 1848.
—*Battersby's Directory* for 1849, p. 312.

But is it then hopeless to endeavour to improve the relation between the Church of Rome in Ireland and the State? Must the religious establishments of the Queen's Irish subjects remain for ever beyond the pale of the conservative policy of the empire? Are there no means of healing the wounds which have festered for centuries, and of making national reparation for national wrong? Happily, this is far from being the case. If the government would but learn how easy it is to deal with men who, content with honorable poverty for themselves, ask for nothing from the State, but protection, independence, and the means of usefulness to the poor flocks whom they serve—and how firm a bulwark of national power and national union, the contentment of such men on their own principles would be—there would be no need of resorting to schemes, which must inevitably rekindle the slumbering embers of religious hate, excite throughout the realm that spirit of resistance to church patronage which has already been evoked in Scotland—and again throw down, not probably to be again solved in the same way, the question of church government in England. The assistance of the Irish Catholic clergy is thought necessary for the pacification of Ireland. Nothing so easy as to obtain it. Begin by embracing in all sincerity the conviction, that whatever may be their faults, *selfishness is not among them*, and that the true cause of any discontent which they have manifested is the deplorable misery of their people. They know better than you, its extent and its cause; they know as well as you, and make full allowance for, the difficulty which must attend all attempts to relieve it. Evince your respect for them, and your respect for yourselves, by proposing nothing to them, which is not perfectly consistent with the principles, to which you as the ministers of a Protestant Sovereign—they as the pastors of a Catholic people, are pledged. Try to forget the old habit of legislating for them without consulting them, and cajoling them when measures which affect the interests of their church are pending, by expectations which you don't intend to realise.

Endeavour to believe and act upon the conviction that the Roman Catholic bishops and priests of Ireland, are really sincere, honest men, in whose estimation the temporal and eternal interests of their flocks are of an importance, infinitely higher than any provisions for their own comfort and convenience. By so doing you will win their esteem and confidence. You will have their active and cordial co-operation in all good objects—and before many years have passed, it will be a subject for equal wonder and regret, that the government of the British Crown in Ireland was so long without deserving the aid of such powerful and cheap auxiliaries.

A minister, sincerely anxious to obtain the confidence of the Catholic clergy and people of Ireland would, if well advised, direct his attention to the following objects :—

1. A competent provision for building, repairing, enlarging, and maintaining, the fabrics of their churches, and for the expences of their public worship.

We find in the writings of Warburton, and of Paley, a great difference of opinion respecting the grounds and the principles on which the maintenance of a church establishment rests. The former held that the Church was naturally the ally of the State—the latter that the theory of the alliance of Church and State was wholly indefensible. But both these eminent men were agreed, that a church establishment, to be at all justifiable, must be the church of the majority of the people (*a*). Catholics, Churchmen, and Dissenters are, fortunately, equally opposed to the application of that principle, in its integrity, to Ireland. But when it is considered, that the State, out of the Ecclesiastical revenues of that country, has yet provided Church accommodation for 367,759 persons (*b*) only, out of a population of 7,943,940, it surely may be hoped, that no insuperable scruples could be raised to the supply of so great a deficiency.

(*a*) Moral and Political Philosophy (1809), 345—Alliance between Church and State, (1811), B. 3, p. 143.

(*b*) The number of persons which the 1293 Protestant Churches of Ireland, in 1837, were capable of accommodating. Report of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for that year.

The late Roman Catholic Archbishop of Tuam, in his examination before the committee of the House of Commons, appointed, in 1825, to inquire into the state of Ireland, stated, that of one hundred and six places of Catholic worship in his diocese, nearly one hundred were thatched, only fifteen to eighteen slated, and that he had no funds whatever applicable to their improvement, except the voluntary contributions of the faithful, of the clergy and bishops, and the aid they receive from their Protestant brethren and neighbours.

His Grace was asked:—

Placing out of consideration the advantage and the comfort that it would be to the people to have suitable places for their reception, do you conceive that any aid would be more acceptable to persons of the Catholic persuasion, in Ireland, than some means being afforded for improving their places of religious worship?

I know of no act that would give the Catholic population of Ireland so much satisfaction as to see that there was some arrangement for the erection of houses of worship for them.

Is it not usual, when the inferior class of the persuasion are unable to contribute money for them, to contribute their labour, and in other ways to compensate for the deficiency of their subscription?—Yes, they give their labour; where it is a thatched chapel the poor bring straw, and they give aid in that manner towards the repair of the chapel.

The assessment made upon such occasions, though in its name voluntary, is, in point of fact, upon those who are able to contribute any thing, an obligation which cannot be avoided?

It cannot be conveniently avoided; and, in order to reconcile the people in some measure to it, the plan I have pursued in having those chapels erected, is to recommend the clergyman to form a committee, to consist of the principal men in each village, and to appoint a treasurer; and that the priest, with the aid of the principal men in each village, should lay an assessment upon the people, according to their circumstances: this assessment is collected in the best manner it can, then put into the hands of a treasurer, and expended afterwards upon the building.

Dr. Magaurin, Roman Catholic Bishop of Ardagh, is asked:—

What is the state of the chapels in your diocese?

There are some of them in a miserable state ; but there is an improvement within these few years.

Are there many places in your diocese where the chapels are entirely inadequate to the number of the congregation ?—I think, in general, all are so.

Will you describe what occurs in such cases, or how the population can attend Divine Worship?—At the chapel at Ballymahon I attend every morning at eight o'clock on Sundays, invariably; and my curate attends at ten and at twelve afterwards, and there is a large congregation each time.

The Rev. Michael Collins is asked :—

In what state are the chapels of the Catholics in the County of Cork ?

In general they are in a very bad state ; they are too small in general for the congregations that resort to them ; efforts were lately made in some places to build new chapels upon a scale more suited to the number that required them, but the poverty of the people, and the pressure of demands for the Established Church, have rendered the progress of these buildings slow indeed, and in some instances they have failed altogether. I have myself an old chapel in the town of Skibbereen in such a state, that I daily fear some accident may occur whenever the people assemble in it, in consequence of the decayed state of the roof, and of the wall ; it is altogether too small for the congregation, so much so, that more than one-half of the congregation are obliged to kneel in the yard, or on the highway in the open air, and they cannot hear the instructions of the priest : I made an attempt to build a chapel on a larger scale, and in a more eligible situation ; I had no means but a halfpenny collection on Sundays at the chapel from the poor as they went in ; a great number of the people going there have not often the means of paying a halfpenny, they are consequently excluded, and lose the benefit of religious worship and religious instructions ; however, after a continuance of exertion since the year 1818 ; we have raised 400*l.* or 500*l.*, with which we commenced a chapel last year, and we have succeeded only in raising part of the walls ; we are going on very slowly, and do not expect to have the walls finished this year for want of means."

There are, I believe at this time, not more than two or three Catholic chapels with thatched roofs in the two first of these

dioceses, one of which, like the thatched cottage of Romulus, it would be well to keep to mark the progress of improvement during the last fifteen or twenty years. In all parts of Ireland, but no where more than in Tuam and Ardagh, the exertions of the bishops and clergy have been unceasing to provide suitable houses for the public worship of their religion, and they have been nobly supported in their endeavours by their flocks. The cathedrals of the Catholic Archbishops and Bishops of Armagh, Dublin, Tuam, Waterford, Kildare and Leighlin, Kerry, Ardagh, and Ossory, and churches in all parts of Ireland, too numerous to be here mentioned, are splendid evidences of the attachment to their religion of the Catholic people. Still, much in many districts remains to be done, and when we recollect that 50,000*l.* has been annually expended by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners of Ireland on 1293 churches of the Establishment, it will readily be conceived that the burthen of supporting 2205 Catholic churches and chapels, must be seriously and inconveniently felt. It behoves the Government, before any attempt is made to negotiate with the Catholic priesthood, to give a plain striking unmistakeable proof of its disposition not to tolerate merely, but to cherish the religion of the great majority of the people. There are no means so effectual of doing this, as to raise up and maintain in every parish, within sight of the little church capable of accommodating 80, 100, 120, or 200 worshippers in which the Act of Uniformity is obeyed—a substantial and commodious edifice in which the thousands who have hitherto felt themselves to be outcasts on account of their faith in their native land, may thank their Maker for all his blessings, but chiefly for the happy change which shall have taken place in the hearts of their rulers. The main thing to be attended to in such a design is, that it be based upon a distinct intelligible principle, such as a Protestant Government may avow, and a Catholic people approve. Fifty years ago there might have been some diffi-

culty in reconciling with the settled policy of the empire, a further provision for the religious worship of persons not conforming to the doctrines of the Established Church. But the legislation of the last twenty years has removed all such impediments. Protestant bishops and archbishops have in a spirit of commendable liberality, and without the least sacrifice of principle, consented to become trustees for Roman Catholic priests and chapels—the Parliament of Protestant England has made a munificent provision for the education of the Irish Catholic clergy. Catholic altars have been erected in the asylums provided by the State for the reception of the impotent and disabled poor. Catholic instruction is in them secured to the orphan children of Catholic parents (*a*). Catholic bishops in various parts of the British dominions receive from the colonial treasuries suitable and competent revenues.

Surely it is time to reap from a more general application to Ireland of the liberal principles thus adopted by the Legislature of the United Kingdom, the lasting fruits of social happiness, peace, and charity.

The statute book of the empire will furnish abundant precedents for enactments calculated to effect such objects.

By the 58 Geo. 3, c. 45, the Crown was empowered to appoint commissioners, afterwards incorporated by the name of “Her Majesty’s Commissioners for Building New Churches,” to examine into the state of the parishes of England and Wales, and to ascertain the most effectual means of providing additional means of church accommodation for the people. The act recited that population had greatly increased, more particularly in the Metropolis and its vicinity, that the churches in many great and populous parishes were inadequate to the accommodation of the inhabitants, and that it was necessary that additional churches and chapels should be erected in such places, and that a certain number of free sittings should be made therein.

(*a*) 1 & 2 Vict. c. 56, ss. 48, 49.

One million sterling, and by a subsequent statute 500,000*l.* were granted by Parliament for the promotion of this object.

The commissioners are empowered to build, rebuild, and enlarge churches and chapels, defraying according to their discretion the whole or part of the charge thereof—upon a general rule that accommodation should be provided for one-fourth, and by the later acts for a larger proportion of the population.

The consent of the bishop of the diocese and of the incumbent of the parish, are necessary to the pulling down, building, rebuilding, and enlarging of churches by the Commissioners. The Commissioners are empowered to accept from persons willing to give the same, any buildings fit to be converted into churches or chapels, and lands, proper for sites of churches, and churchyards attached thereto; and also houses, with five acres of land, for the residence of the incumbent (*a*).

Upon consecration of the church, the house and land become the house of residence and glebe, and vest in the incumbent, for the time being as such.

The Commissioners of Woods, her Majesty, and the Duke of Cornwall, by grants signed by the Chancellors of the Duchies of Lancaster and Cornwall (*b*), and any body politic, collegiate and corporation sole, may sell any such building site, with or without ground for cemeteries, or any such house or garden for residence.

The Commissioners of Woods and Forests, her Majesty, and the Duke of Cornwall, and all corporate and collegiate bodies, are empowered to give and grant any stone, slate, timber, or any materials, from any quarries, forests, or wastes, belonging to them, for building any church and any house, and appurtenances, for the residence of any spiritual person who may serve any church or chapel built under these acts (*c*).

The Commissioners of Customs and Excise of England,

(*a*) 58 Geo. 3, c. 45, s. 33; and 1 & 2 Vict. c. 137, s. 9.

(*b*) S. 34.

(*c*) 59 Geo. 3, c. 134, s. 20.

Scotland and Ireland respectively, with consent of the First Lord, or any three of the Lords of the Treasury, may remit all or any proportion of the duties upon the aforesaid materials, *bonâ fide*, used in any such church or chapel, or order the same to be drawn back or repaid (a).

The Commissioners of Stamps, subject to regulations made by the Lords of the Treasury, may allow the full amount of stamp duties on any deeds, bonds, contracts, agreements, or instruments, made in relation to the purchasing or providing any sites or buildings, any churches, or purchasing or providing any materials for such buildings.

I ask rather in sorrow than reproach, of those who are now anxious to take the Catholic clergy into pay, how it has happened that, during the twenty years which have elapsed since the Catholic Relief Act, nothing of this kind has been done or offered to be done, for the Church of the vast majority of the people? It would be easy to adopt these provisions to the circumstances of its position; on terms satisfactory to its prelates, acceptable to the people, and honourable to the state. The work of church building, in populous places, has been already half done by the generosity and piety of a nation, which various circumstances, and among them their patient submission to the burthen of the Church of another country, have reduced to a state of unexampled poverty and depression. If you really wish to improve the condition of the priests, better far to give them residences and glebes, in right of their offices, and so insure to them a certain amount of visible inalienable comfort, than tempt them to neglect their duties by incomes independent of the good opinion of their flocks.

Let your commissioners be selected on the principles which govern your selection of commissioners, when the interests of your own Church are concerned. A large proportion of them should be prelates of the Roman Catholic Church. The act by which power is given to the appointment, should be drawn up after consultation with them—and the govern-

ment, profiting by past experience, should understand and act upon the belief, that no measure, however promising—will be received as a boon—which interferes with the Episcopal jurisdiction, discipline, and independence of their Church.

It may be asked, whence, in the present state of the finances of the country, are the funds to come for such a change as this? To which, I apprehend, there can be but one answer—from the Ecclesiastical property of Ireland. The amount required would probably not be nearly so large—as might be inferred from the number of the parishes and chapels, and the population who worship in them. The Churches of the Establishment, are, on the showing of the commissioners, in a state of excellent order,—already have the estimates for church works diminished one-half, and well they may, considering the enormous sums which have been spent upon them during the last ten years!

Some time ago it was proposed to get rid of church-rates in England, and to provide a fund for the repair of the fabric of the churches of the kingdom, by a more thrifty system of letting and renewing the leases of Ecclesiastical property. Until the Catholic people of Ireland are satisfied of the intention of the English Government to do them justice; there may possibly be prudential reasons for letting Church lands at rents little more than nominal. If the 22,000 acres of profitable land, which belonged to the suppressed See of Ossory, did really produce no more, in 1847, than 2248*l.* 1*s.* 3*d.*, the greater part of them must be given away (*a*). That they have been given away hitherto to a considerable extent is perfectly plain. You have only to look at the list of tenants, the lands they occupy, and the rents they pay, to be satisfied of it. All this must be changed, of course with a due regard to the just claims of the tenants. In the meantime, a transfer for ten years next to come, by Act of Parliament, of 40,000*l.* or 50,000*l.*, from the account of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners

(*a*) Report of Ecclesiastical Commissioners, 1833; Episcopal Patronage and Revenue; Diocese of Ossory, p. 158.

of Ireland, to the account of "her Majesty's Commissioners for Building new Churches in Ireland," would be productive of the most beneficial effects.

It is idle to suppose that the large sums, which have been hitherto disbursed by the commissioners, can be permanently required for the support of the small substantial unadorned buildings in which the richest classes of the community worship. If the essential usefulness of the Established Church itself, the respectability of its ministers, and a portion of the influence derived from its large patronage, be things worth preserving, depend upon it, the best mode of preserving them, is to make the rent-charge, paid to a great extent by Catholic farmers, in some sense a Catholic as well as a Protestant tax. The members of the Irish Protestant Church may rub their eyes a little, when first called upon to subscribe to so much of the 35,050*l.* 3*s.* 10*d.*, annually disbursed for Bibles, Prayer-books, Communion Elements, Surplices, and Stoves, &c., as may be required for Divine Service in their particular localities; but they will soon recover from the shock, and see the justice and good sense of the arrangement. There will not be a bishoprick, prebend, or benefice the less for years to come; and, should reforms or re-arrangements be still deemed necessary in the Established Church, they will be conducted with a due regard to the important interests at stake, and not under the duress of the pressure, which is now supposed to threaten its destruction.

2. Next to a permanent provision for the public worship of the Catholic people of Ireland, is the suitable recognition of the legal character and status of the Roman Catholic bishops and priests.

A bishop of the church, by law established, is a *corporation sole*; so is the *persona Ecclesiæ*, or parson of a church. They and their successors are incorporated by law, in order to give them certain legal capacities and advantages, particularly that of perpetuity, which in their natural persons they could not have. All personal rights die with the person, and as the necessary forms of investing a series of individuals, one after another, with the same identical rights would be very incon-

venient, if not impracticable, it has been found necessary, when it is for the advantage of the public to have any particular rights kept on foot and continued, to constitute artificial persons, who may maintain a perpetual succession, and enjoy a kind of legal immortality (*a*). As the law now stands in Ireland, property conveyed or bequeathed to a Roman Catholic bishop or priest, as such, would, at his death, descend to his heir or his representative; and there are no means of preventing this inconvenience, where it is intended that property should belong to the bishop, or parish priest, for the time being—that is, to the present incumbent and his successors—but by the intervention of trustees, a mode always attended with expenses sometimes with risk, uncertainty, and the necessity of a resort to legal tribunals.

This evil the late Mr. O'Connell proposed to remedy, by a bill to make the Roman Catholic bishop of every diocese, and the parish priest of every parish, a corporation *sole*.

If it had passed into a law, all the unfortunate irritation which was occasioned four years ago, by the Act for the better regulation of Charitable Donations and Bequests, would have been avoided.

It is difficult to understand, as Lord Hatherton said in the House of Lords, what objections could exist to the constitution of the Catholic archbishops, bishops, and priests, as bodies politic and corporate, for the mere purpose of the inexpensive security of Catholic charitable donations and bequests. But Mr. O'Connell's fate, during his life, was to have some of his best practical measures rejected, and the merit of having proposed them forgotten. It were well if some of them could be adopted, now that he can neither be pained by their failure, nor gratified by their success.

3. In other respects, also, the position of the parish priest might be altered with some increase to his usefulness, his personal comfort, and the interest and contentment of his flock. The law has placed him in a relation of almost unavoidable

(*a*) Blackstone's Commentaries, vol. 1.

antagonism and rivalry with the Protestant minister, whom only it recognises as the pastor of the parish. One is the clergyman of the wealthy few—the other, of the multitude poor. It is folly to aggravate this contrast between their positions by the vexation of idle formalities. By the Easement of Burials Act, in 4 Geo. 4, c. 25, it was enacted:—

“That it should be lawful for the officiating minister of the Church, by law established, in each and every parish in Ireland, *upon application made to him, in writing, by any clergyman or minister not of the Established Church*, stating the death of any member of his congregation, for permission to perform the Burial Service, at the grave of such person, in the churchyard of such parish, according to the rites of such Church or congregation, *to grant permission accordingly*; provided that such permission should be in writing; and that, in order to prevent any interruption or interference with the celebration of any of the rites of the Church of Ireland by law established, such interment and service shall be had and celebrated, at such time only as should be appointed in such permission, by such officiating minister of the Church of Ireland.”

“This Bill,” says the late Dr. Doyle, “was a kind of remedial measure; it reminds one of the bone thrown to Cerberus to engage his attention without satisfying his appetite, as the visitors passed unmolested to the shades below. While the Catholics as one man despised it, while their priests and prelates universally, would rather be condemned to labour at a treadmill than seek a license for interment, or a permit that the remains of one of their communion should be gathered to those of his fathers in the vault or ground which his own religion had enclosed and consecrated; while these sentiments pervaded our entire body, so little were they known or respected, that the organ of the committee who prepared the Bill, new modelled as it was in England, did not hesitate to call it a charter of toleration, and to assure the Parliament with all the confidence of a friend and advocate of Catholic rights, that if passed it would work well; that this bill would work well, which in no one instance has ever worked at all.

'This proved to us not only the evil of our exclusion, and that there is no one to represent our feelings and opinions in Parliament, but that we are considered even there, and by our friends, as a degraded class, who do not require to be treated like other men, and to whom what would be an insult to others may be offered as a boon" (*a*).

These words were written twenty-four years ago by the illustrious Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin. Since then nothing has been done to remedy this cruel grievance. It is one which goes home to the hearts of the people, and must, I think, be felt quite as unpleasantly by the Protestant minister as by the Catholic priest. A short act declaring the right of every parishioner to be buried according to the rites of his own church in the parish churchyard, without permission obtained from the parson—provided that no such interment should take place during Divine Service, would be a wise and salutary improvement.

By the Irish Act, 33 Geo. 3, c. 21, s. 12, by which some relief was granted to the Catholics, it was enacted,

"That nothing therein contained should be construed to extend to authorize any Popish priest, or reputed Popish priest, to celebrate marriage between Protestant and Protestant, or between any Protestant (or one professed within twelve months to be so) and a Papist, unless such Protestant and Papist should have been first married by a clergyman of the Protestant religion.

"And that every Popish Priest, or reputed Popish Priest who should celebrate any marriage between two Protestants, or between any Protestant and Papist, unless such Protestant should have been first married by a clergyman of the Protestant Church, should forfeit the sum of 500*l.* to his Majesty on conviction thereof."

(*a*) This act did however repeal the Irish act of Wm. 3, by which burials in any suppressed monastery, abbey, or convent, or the precincts thereof had been prohibited, and legalized such burials, provided the place had been used for interments within ten years, or the permission of the proprietors was obtained.

By the 3 & 4 Wm. 4, c. 102, "So much of this and other recited acts of the Parliament of Ireland as contained any penal enactment which exclusively affects a Roman Catholic clergyman celebrating marriage between any persons, knowing them, or either of them at the time of such marriage to be of the Protestant religion, or enacted that any Roman Catholic clergyman who should celebrate any marriage between two Protestants, or reputed Protestants, or between a Protestant or reputed Protestant and a Roman Catholic, should be guilty of felony, and suffer death as a felon, without benefit of clergy, or as enacted that any Roman Catholic clergyman who should celebrate any marriage between two Protestants, or between any such Protestant and Papist, unless such Protestant and Papist should have been first married by a clergyman of the Protestant religion, should forfeit the sum of 500*l*." was repealed. But, it was provided,

"That nothing in this act should extend, or be construed to extend to the giving validity to any marriage ceremony in Ireland, which ceremony was not then valid under the existing laws."

It was at one time commonly supposed that the marriage by a Roman Catholic priest of a Protestant with a Catholic, although no ceremony had been performed between them by a Protestant minister, was under the act 3 & 4 Wm. 4, valid. Such, however, is not the case. Some cases of cruel deception practised upon females, have occurred under cover of this defect in the law. The Catholic archbishops and bishops have petitioned the Legislature to remedy this evil, and it is hardly possible to believe that their remonstrance will be neglected. It has been held by the Court of Queen's Bench in Ireland (*a*), that under the Presbyterian Marriage Act, 7 & 8 Vict. c. 81, s. 45, a Catholic priest who celebrates a marriage between two Protestants is guilty of felony. I have no pity for a Catholic priest who celebrates a marriage between two Protestants. But the judgment applies to marriages between Catholics and Protestants, and cases may easily be conceived in which the

(*a*) *Reg. v. Taggart*, Irish Law Reports, vol. 9, p. 395.

invalidity of such marriages, and the guilt of felony attached to them would be productive of the worst injustice. The Catholic prelates have petitioned for relief from this new penalty, and there can be little doubt that their remonstrance will be attended to.

5. By an act of the Parliament of Ireland, 17 & 18 Charles the Second, the support of Protestant Ministers in Cities and Corporate Towns was provided for by a tax upon all the houses of each parish, according to the yearly value of each house, to be allotted and charged on the inhabitants, received by the churchwardens of the parish, and by them paid to the several incumbents. And in case of refusal or delay of payment, the churchwardens were empowered to levy the amount allotted by distress and sale.

By the 7 & 8 Geo. 4, c. 34, reciting that these duties were burthensome to the churchwardens, the incumbents were empowered to appoint collectors of Ministers' Money in the City of Dublin, and within other Cities and Towns Corporate of Ireland. And it was enacted that in case of refusal or delay of payment, it should be lawful for every such collector to levy and distrain in the same manner as churchwardens were theretofore directed to do by the recited act.

This tax is severely felt by all Catholic residents of towns, but it is doubly vexatious and offensive to the Roman Catholic bishops and clergy. There would be no great difficulty in providing a substitute for this insulting impost, and it would be far better to repeal it quietly than wait until—being only collected by sale and distress—it effectually repeals itself.

6. The repeal or amendment of the act 7 & 8 Vict. c. 97, for the more effectual application of Charitable Donations and Bequests.

By this statute a very material alteration was made in the law relating to Roman Catholic Charities. Various acts of Parliament had from time to time been passed in England and in Ireland for the purpose of conferring on societies and institutions, that description of legal immortality which is mentioned in an earlier page of these remarks.

In England the Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty, the Commissioners for Building Churches, the two Universities, the Corporation of the Sons of the Clergy, Bedlam Hospital, the Foundling Hospital, the London Hospital, St. George's Hospital, Greenwich Hospital, and many others too numerous to be here mentioned ; in Ireland, the Commissioners of First Fruits, the Trustees of the Library of the Archbishop of Armagh, the Trustees of the Green Coat Hospital at Cork, and the Foundling Hospital Dublin, the trustees of the Vaughan Charities and others, were incorporated by Act of Parliament, and some of them empowered to take and purchase lands in perpetuity to themselves and their successors, for the permanent support and prosecution of the purposes for which these corporations were respectively formed. No such act has ever been passed in favour of any Roman Catholic Institution, except the trustees of the Royal College of Maynooth.

There is no Roman Catholic corporation, sole or aggregate, to enjoy this privilege of perpetuity for the purposes of its institution.

Roman Catholic establishments were, indeed, until a comparatively recent period, not only without encouragement, but discountenanced by the laws. Although the act of 1 Edward 6, by which superstitious uses were declared, had not been enacted in Ireland, it influenced as a declaration of public policy, the decisions of the Courts of Equity ; and bequests of property, for Catholic religious objects of all kinds, were under the provisions of the 40 Geo. 3, c. 1, confiscated without mercy to Protestant purposes.

As the wealth and consideration of the Irish Catholic body increased, the natural sense of right in the minds of the Judges of the Irish Equity Courts revolted against a system of injustice which no statute had enjoined ; and the late Lord Manners, at length, in the case of a bequest of a sum of money in trust, to apply the interest in clothing such poor children as should be educated in a nunnery at Waterford, declined to act on the presumption that the object contemplated was against public

policy, and ultimately decreed in favour of the intention of the testator (a). The precedent thus established was gladly acted upon by other Judges in similar cases; and as the English act of the 9 Geo. 2, c. 36, by which it was enacted, that no manors, lands, tenements, &c., or sums of money, should be given, conveyed, or settled, to or upon any person or persons, in trust or for the benefit of charitable uses, unless by deed indented and executed before two witnesses, twelve months before the death of the donor, and enrolled within six months,—had not been enacted in Ireland, the charities of Roman Catholics, though they had obtained no facilities, were not subject to any positive restrictions. On the avowed alteration of the policy of the law, as it affected their religion, by the Emancipation Act, this favourable disposition received a legal sanction; and the result was, that except the necessity of appointing trustees, and the unavoidable insecurity and expense to which the *cestui que trust* of small properties is exposed, there was no restraint of any kind, on Catholic donations and bequests for charitable purposes.

By the 7 & 8 Vict. c. 97, a Corporation of Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests is established,

“with power to take and hold all descriptions of property in trust, for building, enlarging, upholding, or furnishing any chapel, or place of religious worship, of persons professing the Roman Catholic religion; or in trust for any archbishop or bishop, or other person professing the Roman Catholic religion; or in trust for any archbishop or bishop, or other person, in holy orders of the Church of Rome, officiating in any district, or having personal superintendence of any congregation of persons professing the Roman Catholic religion, and for those who shall from time to time so officiate, or shall succeed to the same pastoral superintendence, or for building a residence for his or their use.”

If the act had stopped there, it would have given to those who might choose to make the commissioners trustees of their

(a) Attorney General *v.* Power, 1 Ball & B. 145.

donations and bequests for Catholic church purposes, the power of securing their bequests in perpetuity, *yet without the influence which attaches to the possession of property*—to the objects of their bounty. It will be observed, however, that this facility was confined to one particular class of charities. Even for them nothing was done, beyond the mere nomination of official trustees appointed by the Crown to administer their funds. All others, such as diocesan seminaries and colleges, establishments for ladies bound by religious vows, of which there are about fifty in Ireland, mostly Sisters of the Orders of Mercy and Charity; orphan societies; asylums for aged men and women; asylums for female penitents; Catholic hospitals; guilds, and so forth, are left by that section where they were.

But then comes the 16th section, which imposes, and was intended to impose, a severe restriction upon all charities indiscriminately.

“That no devise or bequest for pious or charitable uses in Ireland shall be valid to create or convey any estate in lands, tenements, or hereditaments for such uses, unless the deed, will, or other instrument, containing the same shall be duly executed three calendar months at the least before the death of the person executing the same, and unless every such deed or instrument, not being a will, shall be duly registered within three calendar months after the execution thereof.”

This enactment was preceded by no inquiry ascertaining the relative amount of bequests made at a distant period, or recently before the death of testators. No flagrant instances of the unjust disherison of natural heirs by deathbed donations for Catholic purposes, had been complained of. It never had been imputed, except by the Bishop of London, before the Mortmain Committee(*a*), that the alarms of dying sinners were worked upon by unscrupulous priests, for their purposes. It was a deliberate, uncalled for, unjustified, contrivance to diminish the amount of property held by any tenure, or in any hands for Catholic charitable or ecclesiastical purposes. It had not

(*a*) Report of Mortmain Committee, p. 82.

even the poor excuse of assimilating the law of Ireland, to the law of England, or of Scotland.

In Scotland, a man, although ill of the disease of which he afterwards dies, may charge or convey landed property to any person for any purposes whatever, provided he survive sixty days. If cut off by an accident, occurring after its execution, the deed cannot be reduced (*a*). And this law is by the 2 & 3 Wm. 4, c. 115, preserved to the Catholics of Scotland.

In England, the 9 Geo. 2, c. 36, establishes a general rule, but there are important exceptions to it.

By the 43 Geo. 3, c. 107, the Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty are empowered to take all property—bequeathed or devised to them by will of any sane person, for and towards the augmentation of the maintenance of ministers officiating in churches and chapels where the Liturgy and rites of the Established Church are used and observed.

The two Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and all the colleges and houses of learning connected with them, as well as the colleges of Eton, Winchester, and Westminster, are by the 9 Geo. 2, c. 36, itself, expressly excepted from the operation of its general provisions.

If the government (taking all reasonable security against abuse), were now willing to make exceptions in favour of similar objects connected with the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, such as Roman Catholic diocesan seminaries, and other educational institutions and the religious orders, whose services are in many parts of Ireland of infinite value to the poor, it is possible that the Board might in time obtain some portion of public confidence. Hitherto, notwithstanding the veneration in which three of the Roman Catholic commissioners are held—and the perfectly unblemished honour and character of them all—they have not been troubled with the administration of any new Catholic donations or bequests.

Nor is this in the least degree attributable to the interference

(*a*) Bell ; Principles of the Law of Scotland, p. 647.

or influence of their Protestant colleagues. Nothing could be more fair or better calculated to inspire confidence, than the bye-laws to which the judicial members of the board assented, and the manner in which they, but particularly the present Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench, then Master of the Rolls, interpreted the provisions of the statute.

I ventured four years ago to submit, that the best mode of avoiding any danger of an improper interference by the lay commissioners with the discipline and jurisdiction of the Church, would be to constitute all the Catholic Metropolitans, commissioners *ex officio*, and to make the certificate of each of them conclusive on all points, relating to the discipline and usages of the Church in his province. It is gratifying to find that this suggestion has been adopted, by their graces the Catholic Archbishops of Armagh and Dublin, and the Bishop of Ferns, in a petition which they have lately prepared—and in which they also pray for the repeal of the 16th section.

For my part I adhere to my first impression, confirmed as it was by the opinion of most of the Catholic Bishops and clergy of Ireland, that the act was intended by its author (*a*), whoever he may have been, to starve and cripple the exertions of the Roman Catholic Church. It is difficult, I admit, to reconcile that view with the act of the following year, by which the endowment of Maynooth was increased; but the Bequests' Act speaks for itself, and in my judgment, no one who understands it, can think otherwise of it than I do. By the enemies of the Roman Catholic Church, its authors must, I conceive, be considered to have covered a multitude of their sins, and it is doubtful whether any modification of its provisions could render them generally acceptable to those, whose interests it pretended to serve.

The Roman Catholic archbishops and bishops have prepared a petition for presentation to Parliament, in which, acknowledging

(*a*) The late Lord Wharncliffe first moved the bill in the House of Lords.

the important benefits of late years conferred on the Catholics of Ireland, they lament that the Catholic regular clergy should be excluded from those rights and privileges which their fellow-subjects enjoy. Their Lordships assure the Legislature that the perfect loyalty, unimpeachable virtues, and eminent services of the regular clergy, in promoting sound morality, are not surpassed by any portion of her Majesty's subjects, and pray that all their legal disabilities may be removed, and that they may be placed on a footing with the other Catholic clergy.

The case of the religious orders is undoubtedly one of peculiar hardship. When the Catholic Emancipation Act was making its way at the expense to its authors of great obloquy through Parliament, the clauses relating to the regular clergy naturally excited their apprehensions, and it was understood at the time, that the most friendly assurance had been given, that those clauses should not be executed to their vexation. That pledge was faithfully redeemed, and until the passing of the 7 & 8 Vict. c. 107, except perhaps in some few cases in the Irish Courts of Equity, they sustained no more practical inconvenience from the state of the law than their Catholic clerical brethren. But this last act professing to extend a new privilege to other Catholic clergymen, expressly exempts "any order, community, or society of the Church of Rome bound by monastic rules" as illegal, from its benefits, gives a new sting to the clauses relating to them in the Relief Act, and amounts to an injunction that all bequests and donations to them, their convents, or chapels, shall be applied to objects other than those of their donors.

It is quite unnecessary for me to add anything to what is stated by the Catholic prelates, as to the merits and services of the religious orders. There are some districts in which the people, except at great inconvenience, would be without any religious worship or institution, but for their exertions. The alarm entertained in England about them is really a mere bugbear; but still it exists in the minds of honest but pre-

judiced men—and, notwithstanding the great ability with which the cause of the regulars has been advocated in Parliament, I fear it has not yet, much advanced in public opinion. Whether it would be possible in the event of an amendment of the Bequests' Act, to extend its provisions, so as to include all existing establishments of religious orders within its enabling clauses, and thus allay the fears of their undue increase by which some minds are haunted, I don't know. But the heat and acrimony which the repeated discussion and refusal of their just claims create, are very serious evils to the general interests of the Catholic body.

Having thus endeavoured to direct the attention of those who may chance to read these pages, to the chief impediments which exist to a more friendly relation between the Irish Catholic Church and the State—I venture to submit, that they are all capable of being removed, or very much mitigated, without injury to vested interests, violation of religious principles or danger to established institutions. With respect to the Protestant Church of Ireland, I feel quite satisfied, that no impartial inquirer can read the annual reports of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners without being convinced that 40,000*l.* or 50,000*l.* per annum might well be spared from their revenues without any serious inconvenience. When I find that during the last thirteen years, a sum not less than a million sterling has been spent on the building, rebuilding, and expenses of Divine Worship of 1200 churches, in which the richest classes of the community worship, and which have not even the sorry merit of adorning the country out of its own spoils, I cannot doubt, that large reductions may be made in that expenditure without peril to the essential usefulness of the Church as a religious society for the cure of souls. When again I find that 132,701 acres described as “profitable,” belonging to thirteen suppressed bishopricks, have produced in the hands of the commissioners no greater income than 42,770*l.*, and remember at what rate land has been let in Ireland, I cannot help suspecting that the ecclesiastical

revenues might be made, without injustice to the tenants of church lands, more conducive to the contentment of the Irish people and the ease of its government, than they are at present. Unfortunately the most distinguished statesmen of our time, by a very recent, elaborately constructed, and deliberately adopted measure, for the regulation of the temporalities of the Irish church, have bound themselves hand and foot, to the maintenance of the existing system. It would require, I cannot help thinking, a harder struggle with themselves than with the feelings of the people of England to enable them to undo what has been so lately and so solemnly decided. Yet if timely precautions be not taken, the day will come when amendment is no longer possible—when public attention will be called to abuses long veiled in mist and obscurity, and the cry will be, not for correction but destruction. Better, while there yet is time, to endeavour without sacrifice of principle gradually to accommodate the existing system to the exigencies of the country, looking forward for a final adjustment to a period, when the earnest now given of a sincere desire to reconcile conflicting interests, shall have produced its fruits, than peremptorily disregard all warning, and refuse all reform. The Irish Church Temporalities Act, ably, and I have no doubt honestly executed by the commissioners, has, beyond all question been productive of the greatest benefit to the Protestant Church. It has swept away many shameful sinecures, caused a great increase of zealous endeavour to promote the doctrines of the reformed faith, and relieved the Catholic people, sensibly and unmistakeably, from that perpetual worry and vexation which could hardly fail to mar any chance it ever had of success. But on the other hand, it has laid bare the enormous disproportion between church revenue and spiritual service. It has operated as was anticipated of the first tithe Composition Act as a Bill of Discovery; the value of church property has been ascertained by it, and in the language of Dr. Doyle, “all who have eyes can see, the glories of the establishment.”

The disgrace and overthrow of a religious society in communion with the Church of England, and to which the faith of Parliament has been repeatedly pledged, would in its direct and indirect consequences be a social evil of the most serious magnitude. The contrast presented by the small, but comfortable, congregation, which assembles every Sunday in the neat, snug, well warmed and well painted little oratory, called the parish church, and the uncared for multitude who worship how and where they can, is already most injurious to the peace and happiness of the country. But a violent disruption of the ties which bind the higher classes of society in Ireland to the Established Church in England would be productive of still greater evils. I feel quite satisfied that such a mode of adjusting this ancient quarrel is not desired by, and would give no satisfaction to, the Catholic people.

Neither are they advocates for the recognition by the State, of the principle of religious indifference. They have no wish to see their country disgraced, by the monstrous incongruity of two established churches, one protesting against the other, both secured by law, in co-ordinate rank, dignity, and authority. They do not grudge to the small religious society which is established in Ireland, in connexion with the Church of England, the precedence which the law secures to it. In their eyes freedom is incompatible with, and better than State favour; but they do claim that the religion of the vast majority of a people, bound by a community of interest, and by the dearest recollections of renown to England, who have been ever ready at a moment's notice, to sail to any clime, and pour out their blood like water in her cause, should by the laws of England, be countenanced, protected, and cherished, upheld in high respect and veneration, and in its place provided with all the means of making it a blessing to the people who profess it.

The advocates of a provision for the Roman Catholic clergy of Ireland are, many of them, I have no doubt, perfectly sincere in their belief, that it would, as charity does, bless alike the givers and the receivers. Although I think the desire to connect

the Roman Catholic Church of Ireland by a sort of morganatic union with the State, is perceptible in the Maynooth College Act, and in the Act for the better regulation of charitable donations and bequests, I do not believe a direct interference by means of pecuniary arrangements with its discipline or episcopal jurisdiction, is seriously contemplated by persons of any weight or influence, in either House of Parliament. I know it is common in the careless conversation of society, to hear it asserted, that the Catholic priesthood are a set of troublesome firebrands, and that their ardour would be quenched, by making their salaries dependent on their conduct. But this notion which assumes the expedience of restraining by means other than their own sense of propriety, the free exercise of their rights as citizens, is not, I am satisfied, adopted by any party, or indeed by any public man, of mark, or authority in the State. It is inconsistent with all that has been done since 1828 by Sir Robert Peel, and with the whole course and character of Lord John Russell's political career.

Assuming therefore, that if a State provision is offered to the Catholic clergy it will be offered on terms the least unfavourable to its acceptance, and the least inconsistent with the discipline and constitution of their Church, still it appears to me to be most objectionable—and very little calculated to secure to the cause of order and good government in Ireland, the weight and influence of those, who are no doubt capable of giving efficient support to whatever they approve.

The position of a Roman Catholic priest in a country, the higher orders of which are for the most Protestant, a country in which a tone and fashion of conformity to the religion of the State extends to classes of society, which but for it, could advance none but the most ordinary claims to consideration, is in many respects—peculiar. It is impossible to conceive any one unworthy motive, for aspiring to the ministry in the Irish Catholic Church. From the first moment of its contemplation, the life it offers must present itself to the mind of the youthful student, as one of privation and self denial. That

feeling increases in strength in the course of the years which elapse before he can be ordained, and during which he has acquired, a degree of mental cultivation, which may render success in other pursuits by no means improbable. Persons who have not taken the trouble to inform themselves respecting the practical working of a system which they are very ready to condemn, and much too confident of their ability to improve, have little idea of the number of excellent young men who pause on the threshold of the sanctuary, find by self-study and the advice of their superiors, that they are not called to the holy office of the cure of souls, and thankful for the instruction they have received, become useful members of society, in other walks of life. But supposing the collegian to proceed through the various degrees of minor orders which are so many warnings to him, to be cautious as he treads, and that he arrives at the dignity of the priesthood, what then are his prospects? Ten, fifteen, twenty years, of laborious disheartening service as a curate among the poorest of the poor! During the whole of that time an entire abnegation of his own will as to his place of residence, an unreserved devotion of himself at all hours of the day and night, to duties, which nothing but the consciousness of doing good to a pious and thankful people could requite. When the best years of his life are gone, he, in the due gradation of preferment, becomes a priest of a parish, where probably he is altogether unknown. Once inducted he can only be removed for a distinct cause of canonical fault for which by the law of the Catholic Church, according to its degree, he may be suspended, deposed, or even degraded by his Bishop (*a*). He is now dependent for support on the generosity and gratitude of his flock, who generally take care to institute between him

(*a*) The occasions for the exercise of this authority are rare indeed. And as the law gives the Bishop no power to examine witnesses on oath or declaration, and he cannot of course act upon doubtful, much less hearsay testimony—the only wonder is—that misconduct for which the canon law, makes ample provision, is not of occasional occurrence.

and his predecessor—a tolerably strict comparison. His lot may be cast in a district, where the religious or political opinions of the more fortunate, are of a character to exclude him from all access to such society, as might relieve the dull monotony of his attendance, on the mass of poverty which surrounds him. His duties, were he not sustained in them by the hope of a higher reward than this world can give, are such as to break the strongest body, and wear down the strongest mind. Neither distance, nor infirm health, nor inclemency of season, nor dread of contagion, nor peril of any kind, keeps him from the bedside of the sick parishioner, who, warned of the approach of death, requires his assistance. There is no sacrifice, he will not make, no expense he will not incur, to discharge this important duty. His greatest happiness is to soothe with the consolations of religion, the pillow of the dying penitent, or to feel the assurance in the just man's departure, of an end, precious in the sight of God. And think you that the people to whom charity like this is shown, have no pleasure in evincing their gratitude for it? There is no Catholic whatever his condition, who does not feel the high value of such services, and the knowledge on the part of the humblest peasant, that he may command them for himself and his family in his hour of need, endears to him his church and its pastors. Nor is it only in the last dread moment of existence, that the priest is the comforter of the poor. In all their troubles, griefs, and anxieties, as well as on occasions of domestic happiness, his kindness and attention are appreciated by those who have none other, above their own degree, to sympathize with them. He composes differences, heals dissensions, admonishes and instructs the young, reclaims the sinful, consoles the bereaved, the aged and the infirm. He wins the confidence of his flock by the punctual and edifying discharge of his sacred functions, and the regularity and abstemiousness of a life from which all superfluity is retrenched, and laid by, for works of mercy, the adornment of the altar, or the decorous service of the church.

It will be said, this is the picture of a parish minister faithful in the discharge of his duty, the original of which may be found in the Churches of England and Scotland, as well as in the Roman Catholic communion. I don't doubt it, nay such instances have come under my own observation in both ; but the lives of clergymen in most Christian countries, are not so exclusively devoted to the humblest and the most destitute class of the community, as is often the life of the Irish priest. There is rarely so wide a waste between the feelings and modes of thought, of the clergyman of the parish and the landed proprietors, as religious jealousies fostered by bad laws, have made in Ireland. No where but there, is a rival pulpit set up, and endowed by the Government, to decry the doctrines which he believes and teaches. Everywhere but there, the spirit of the laws, the great national establishments and institutions in which that spirit is embodied, and the tone of cultivated society are in harmony with the religion of the people. Its minister, in addition to the mere income attached to his cure, enjoys the respect and consideration of all classes of his fellow citizens.

But what security shall the people of whom the Irish priest is the spiritual guide receive, for the faithful discharge by his successor of his duties to their children, if just at that age when passion takes the reason prisoner, and the choice of life is made by the youth of the Irish Catholic colleges, the glittering lure of a state pension is dangled before their eyes? As things are now, no man enters into Holy Orders, without a sincere and hearty purpose to redeem, to its last letter, the solemn pledge which he gives at his ordination. If, when he enters on his ministry, his heart should fail, or his zeal through the weakness of human nature grow cool, every incentive which can operate on the mind of man is at hand, to revivify and confirm his resolution. The solemn admonishment of his bishop in the name of Him, in whose sight the very heavens are not clean — *Accipe potestatem offerre sacrificium Deo, et missas celebrare,*

is for ever ringing in his ears. The remembrance of it, and the daily privilege it confers, are his sure safeguard against temptation. A faithful discharge of duty, brings with it not only peace, the courage of a good conscience, influence and honour, but also worldly means sufficient for the requirements of his station. By neglect of duty he forfeits them all. Beginning with a pure unbiassed wish, to serve God in the sacred ministry—he is sustained amidst the trials and mortifications of his position, by the remembrance that they were the deliberate and disinterested choice of his early life—and the result is—that his character is distinguished for all the qualities which befit his station, and for which the great body of the Irish priesthood is revered. It may well be doubted how long this would last, if all who took orders at Maynooth or elsewhere, received at the same time a vested interest in a government pension.

The measures which I have ventured to suggest in an earlier part of these remarks, would materially improve the position, the respectability in the eyes of Protestants—the personal consequence, so to speak, of the Irish priest, in his neighbourhood, without increasing his pecuniary resources—or impairing the respect now paid to him by his flock. They would be quick enough to see, that no arrangement had been made, between their Church and the State, which was not eminently conducive to their own comfort, and to the credit and honour of their religion. Gradually, year by year, through exertions similar to those of the present Ecclesiastical Commissioners of Ireland—an appearance of increased neatness, order, and preservation would be observed about their places of religious worship—and the residence of their pastor, which would give a sort of weekly practical earnest—that they were at length cared for by the government of their country, and that their faith was no longer to be to them, in the eyes of their richer neighbours, a reproach. It would soon become known in every cabin throughout the Kingdom, that the church accommodation at Armagh,

at Longford, at Kilkenny and elsewhere, had been found wholly inadequate to the wants of the people, and that funds had been placed at the disposal of the bishops, by the Commissioners, for the completion of churches and cathedrals already sufficiently advanced, to be for ever, monuments of the zeal and love of a pious people, for the beauty of the house of prayer. The list of Catholic Chapels enlarged, rebuilt, repaired and furnished, with funds, in part at least, supplied by the commissioners, would, at the close of every session be laid before Parliament, and through Parliament before the people of Ireland, to their infinite contentment. As material prosperity increased, the wealthy of their own communion—aye, and the wealthy of the hitherto hostile creed, would vie with each other in their exertions to improve and soften the manners of the people, by associating their religious feelings with the contemplation of those beautiful representations of the various stages of the Saviour's life and passion, which are engraved upon the memories of us all, and adorn the altars of every land in which the Church of Rome is upheld in respect and reverence. Would not this be better than destroying the influence of the man—whose principle, conscience, and sense of duty, were but yesterday the only holds you had upon the loyalty and good conduct of the people? No doubt the first suggestion of such a change as this, would be denounced as an abandonment of Protestant principle, a betrayal of the Protestant Church, a sacrifice of the interests of the Protestant people of Ireland to the clamour of their relentless enemies. But what real danger could result from it to the interests of the Establishment? Am I to be told that the respectable congregation which I saw at Callan on the first of October, could not, or would not supply the means of upholding their little Church, and providing stoves, Prayer Books, Surplices, and Sacramental Elements for their own use, during the next ten years, if by so doing they could contribute to the religious peace and social concord of their neighbourhood? I believe nothing of the kind. Besides, we began by a declaration of a

respectable authority in matters of conservative policy—that unless some large concession to the great body of the people is made—the Church must yield to the irresistible pressure which threatens its destruction. The question no longer is whether anything should be done, but what is the best thing to be done to improve the now unfortunate relations between the Church of Rome in Ireland and the State.

The object proposed to myself in these remarks, will not be attained if they fail in satisfying many just-minded Englishmen, that the evils in the condition of Ireland, which all deplore, are capable, without political inconvenience, or sacrifice of religious principle, of early and great alleviation. I have been most unfortunate, if they do not succeed in removing from the minds of many in Ireland, who can hardly doubt the sincerity of the feeling which has prompted them, the benumbing influence of that despair of obtaining justice from the Legislature, which now pervades all ranks and classes of the Catholic people. They do not know, what I have daily opportunities of noting, how much the minds of persons here, even the most attached to the principles of their own religion, are disturbed by the reproach of Ireland's misgovernment, and how earnestly they long to be comforted by the assurance of her happiness and prosperity.

Before a nation abandons itself to that despondence, which is the most insurmountable of all obstacles to the correction of abuses, it should at least remember, how much it has already gained—how many hard battles have been fought in Parliament for an approach to the principles which are advocated in these pages—how often the dearest feelings of departed and of living statesmen, the generous ambition of the leaders of great parties, have been sacrificed, to their endeavours to make atonement for the injustice of their ancestors. Never, in my humble judgment, has the influence of this disposition been more manifest than now. If I might venture to give expression to the appeal which is made to the Irish people, by all who take interest in its affairs—whether in private society, the resorts of commerce, the clubs,

the Courts, or the Senate, it is—"Do, show how the evils of your country can be remedied, without forcing us into a hopeless conflict with the religious convictions, and the national pride of the English people, and command our services. How is it, while our time is consumed, our patience exhausted, our political positions endangered, by the hard necessity of taking part in discussions which can lead to little, affording at most, an opportunity to your enemies of obtaining credit for worthless concessions, that the representatives of a people, which has one flagrant and admitted grievance, make no appeal to us for its redress?" It is difficult to deny the reasonableness of these complaints, painful to go home and reflect, that while the poor and the lowly, with the front and attitude of consistent men, still cling immoveably, and at a cost altogether beyond their strength, to their protest against the injustice done to their forefathers—others, to whom Providence has given many talents to be accounted for, are tame enough to bear without a blush, the taunts which assail them.

Inured as I am, to a total abstinence from all allusion to religious differences in our English Courts of Justice, I have no words to describe, the shudder with which for one whole day, I listened at Clonmel, to a discussion of the proportion between the number of Protestants and of Catholics on a panel, from which twelve men were to be balloted, to try a fellow-subject for his life. In the condition of society indicated by such a proceeding, it is impossible that any country, under any form of government, can prosper.

I believe, with Lord Ellenborough, that the evils of Ireland are of a social, rather than of a political character,—with Mr. Bright, that the time has arrived for a signal reparation of her ancient wrongs,—that religious injustice and its poisonous fruit, religious discord, are responsible for most of her disorders, and that the speediest and most effectual mode of removing them, is to bring the practical working of an intolerant and indefensible system, earnestly, frequently, and perseveringly, to the notice of the people and the Parliament of England.

Table of Benefices in the Diocese of Ossory, showing the Amount of the Population in each Parish, the Number of Persons the Parish Church is capable of accommodating, and the gross Income of the Incumbent.

Benefice.	Population.	Church Room for.	Gross Income. £ s. d.
Aghavoe	6196	200	540 5 10½
Aghoure	6486	300	915 7 2
Aglishmartin	401	—	106 18 5½
Aharney	—	—	318 19 6
Attannagh	4017	150	541 6 3½
Aughmacart	3733	150	246 13 4
Ballylarkin	243	—	30 15 4½
Ballynemara	867	120	90 18 6
Blackrath	730	—	139 1 7
Bordwell	869	—	138 9 2½
Burnchurch	7965	100	1807 3 7½
Callan	14,657	330	2415 11 3½
Castlane	778	100	264 2 6
Castlecomer	13,242	700	987 4 7½
Clomantagh	4261	180	103 3 5
Clonmore	947	120	288 8 3½
Donoghmore	1211	200	505 5 0
Dungarvan	1784	100	179 10 0
Dunkill	5098	100	541 9 2¾
Dunmore	2660	100	232 10 0
Durrow	2911	300	160 0 0
Eirke	5565	150	724 0 10½
Ennismag	550	200	185 0 0
Fertagh	3265	250	374 9 10½
Fiddown	6073	500	1082 0 0
Gowran	2735	150	531 1 10¼
Inchiholopan	2621	300	528 18 11½
Inistiogue	3998	200	380 0 0
Jerpoint East	1983	—	136 1 2
Kells	5778	200	875 3 1½
Kilbeacon	2878	100	188 0 0
Kilcoan	937	—	158 1 11½
Kilculliheen	1756	200	78 6 8
Kilfane	2017	100	602 7 11
Killamery	1837	100	283 19 0
Killermagh	1078	130	482 0 0

Benefice.	Population.	Church Room for.	Gross Income. £ s. d.
Kilmacow	1923	70 ...	393 0 0
Kilmanagh	1663	80 ...	643 2 6
Kilmoganny	2107	200 ...	108 2 0
Kilmocar	1413	— ...	86 0 0
Knoctopher	7327	200 ...	1493 12 7½
Listerling	1551	90 ...	278 9 2
Mayne	633	— ...	240 3 1
Mothel	3764	300 ...	746 8 7½
Odogh	4644	150 ...	430 0 0
Offerlane	9915	400 ...	618 8 9
Polrowan	2975	— ...	284 2 0
Rathcoole	1331	— ...	109 19 11
Rathdowny	7576	250 ...	866 6 9
Rathsaran	868	140 ...	298 0 0
Rostercon	6790	100 ...	421 4 5¾
The Rower	3589	200 ...	560 0 0
St. John's	6461	250 ...	331 1 6
St. Mary's	5000	700 ...	195 9 1
St. Patrick's	2743	— ...	698 1 2
Seirkyran	1484	300 ...	161 9 5½
Skeirke	911	100 ...	389 7 10
Tascoffin	1283	150 ...	185 0 0
Thomastown	3959	129 ...	518 10 0